

AN AWKWARD MEETING

BY RICHARD HENRY SAVAGE



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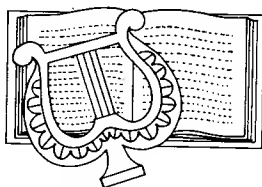
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AN AWKWARD MEETING

And Other
Thrilling Adventures

BY

COL. R. H. SAVAGE

Author of

'My Official Wife'

'An Exile from London'

Etc., Etc.

LONDON

F. V. WHITE & CO.

14 *BEDFORD STREET, STRAND, W.C.*

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An Awkward Meeting

I CAN look back now and see the anxious faces of a score of hardy Californians gathered around the fireplace of a huge log cabin, on the banks of Soquel Creek, in that memorable winter of 'sixty-two.'

Forty days and forty nights of unexampled tempest and storm had realised the worst anticipations of property owners, and disaster and ruin reigned over the whole Golden State! The capital city, Sacramento, was inundated, all business was paralysed in these ante-rail-road days, the crops of the interior valleys were destroyed, the broad plains covered with dying herds, and every water runlet of the State was a raging river.

Fenced in with the Sierra Nevadas and the

Coast Range, with a loop of mountains closing the North and South, California was isolated. Travel was impossible, the mails were cut off, stage roads were obliterated, and only a few steamers moving on the Sacramento and San Joaquin kept up a semblance of commercial movement.

Mining was impossible in the Sierras, and fortunes were swept away by the remorseless and vindictive floods. With desperate efforts the eastern telegraph and overland mails were kept partly open, and, to the loyalists of a State about evenly divided between North and South, the depressing news of continued Union disasters brought the last touch of misery to stern men almost ready to 'throw up the sponge.'

To the Committee on Ways and Means gathered around that blazing hearth, the council of the night was a momentous one. A dozen buildings, with an extensive sawmill, were hemmed in at the forks of Soquel and Williams Creeks, in the Santa Cruz mountains. The huge forty-foot mill-wheel was anchored

to the mill and a dozen huge redwoods, with chains, cables, and all available fastenings.

The proprietor's pretty cottage contained his family of a wife and two younger children, who had watched in these days of storm their beautiful gardens swept away, in dismay. To the west, Soquel Creek, a purling trout stream, was now running fifty feet deep, and the hugest ironclad might have been swept away like a lost buoy on that raging yellow flood. The coast Sierras rise up five thousand feet on that side, barring off help from Santa Clara Valley, forty miles away. To the east, the great spurs of the same Sierras rose up in awful majesty, barring off any aid from the Pajaro Valleys.

It was but ten miles to the sea, at the little port of Soquel, on Santa Cruz Bay, but no human ingenuity could devise a means of crossing the doubled waters of the creeks to the south.

To the north, ending at the little plateau where the twenty workmen and their employer's family were beleaguered, was a spinal

ridge, extending between the two creeks, and losing itself after twenty miles in the huge natural fortifications of grim Loma Prieta, thirty miles away.

The canyons and inner regions of Santa Cruz County were settled then only by a few uncouth western and south-western squatters, who, at this period, were waging a sporadic private war with revolver and rifle, and finishing up quarrels begun years before on the Missouri and Kansas boundaries. A wild, lonely region was the great Soquel Augmentation Ranch, a territory large enough for a foreign duke's domain. It stretched from Watsonville to Loma Prieta, from the little village of Soquel, near the sea, to the summit of the San Jose divide.

Nature's boldest handiwork was seen in this miniature Switzerland, and the hills and canyons were clad with the forest primeval. Huge redwoods, magnificent firs and oaks, superb madronas, pines and cottonwoods, maples and stone pines, were the unspoiled

riches of this beautiful solitude. The little clearings were occupied by the Pike County marauders and their north-western foes, the 'dim forest arches' hid the abundant game of a hunter's paradise, and the creeks teemed with salmon and delicious trout. To a city boy, released from academic toil, this wild region was a paradise of wonders. From fourteen to sixteen, I found Nature's magic in the breath of these mountains, the superb ozone-laden air of the dim canyons. A wonderful Nimrod and 'a mighty hunter before the Lord,' was Johnny White, the Missouri boy of eighteen, who was my 'dhuine-wassail,' and taught me every art of woodcraft. One of seven sons, who nearly all perished by border feud, or who drifted east to get killed with 'Pop Price' in old Missouri. He knew every bit of forest lore, and made me as good a mountaineer, and, finally, even a bit better rifle shot than himself.

He taught me the arts of the 'shekarry' which have stood me in stead, in later years,

over four continents, and half the time we were absent from our domiciles, camping in the untracked forest.

It was the golden flood-tide of youth, when I had 'time to burn,' and the huge rancho seemed to me to be only a hunting park for my especial benefit, and Johnny White my man Friday. I bribed him with stores of ammunition and stray half dollars to desert all useful pursuits and, as he expressed it, 'make a man of me.'

I can see this tow-headed borderer yet, toasting venison on a ramrod by the fire in our little bivouac, or broiling the trout that we had twitched from the pools, while I lay upon the drifted leaves and read to him *Ivanhoe*, or bits of the sad misadventures of Philip Wakem and rich-hearted Maggie Tulliver, from a stray copy of the *Mill on the Floss*. Johnny and I agreed on hunting as the main object of man's career here below, with riding a bucking horse as an extra touch to a polite education, but he insisted that I should skip

all but the 'fighting parts' of the books—and, alas! I went in for sentiment even then! But we compromised on *Charley O'Malley*! In return for my literary tuition, he taught me to play poker, California Jack, and to sing his *repertoire* of quaint old Missouri ballads and songs of the frontier squatters. I recall 'Barbara Allen,' and a doleful lament over the death of 'Mike Fink, the Boatman.' If Johnny has sought the other shores, peace to his ashes! He was to me a human marvel, for he could make biscuits, and I have often watched him with gnawing pangs of envy, for I never crossed that *pons asinorum*. My culinary career stopped at flap-jacks. I stole bottles of molasses from the family stores to reward Johnny White for 'extra effort,' and, with that succulent unguent, we did succeed in making way with his 'short-range,' dead-shot, camp-made hot bombshells.

On the particular night of the conference in the log cabin, I was an eager listener. The one head of a family was comforting his

frightened household, for without, the storm howled in all its fury.

The long rains had loosened the soil upon the mountain sides, and at intervals of a few minutes the heaviest monster trees came sliding down the steep slopes, falling over into the canyons with the thundering boom of Gettysburg's artillery. The great double log cabin was builded of squared logs, eighteen inches thick, and heavily pinned at the corners. The triple-laid roof of 'shakes' was proof against the wildest storms of this snowless land, and the one burning question before the council was that of food.

It was a serious one, for with the exception of a few family supplies in the proprietor's cottage, the larder was empty, only a half-barrel of salt pork remaining. The chickens, sheep, and pigs of the little delta had disappeared in the four weeks' siege. The fifty oxen of the mill had been swept away by the flood, or lain down sadly to drown in the flooded corrals. The two huge stacks of hay

garnered up had gone 'down the river' with the barns. A pretty cow had been slaughtered, and now two pet dogs and a canary bird were the only live animals upon the cut-off delta. The flour was almost exhausted, and twenty brawny lumbermen have 'growing appetites.'

The disheartened proprietor had seen a fortune in sawed lumber whirled away down the insatiate flood. Only one horse remained of all the stock. The mill was filled solid with stones and gravel, and the wheel had to be later dug out of fifteen feet of concrete. The river bed for a mile had to be lowered to begin operations when all the water buckets of the gods were emptied.

But, money loss, business ruin and family troubles paled before the cold, practical question of possible starvation. The terrific mountains towered up behind to the north. It was eighty miles across two mountain ranges with impassable torrents to Los Gatos. None but the bravest mountaineers could hope to ever breast these trackless hills in good weather, and now

the greasy chapparal clasped everything with hooked thorns. The refined wife of the mill-owner, the two tender children prisoned there, were hostages to fortune.

The council was a long and earnest one. For days, attempts had been made to open communication with the tribe of Whites on the west bank of the now mighty Soquel. Old 'Pop White,' bare-breasted and nimble at seventy-five, was seen across the raging flood with his stalwart guerrilla guard, 'Morris,' 'Abe,' 'Luther,' 'Bill,' 'Sam,' 'Dan'l,' and last but not least, that admirable Crichton of all youthful 'Pikes,' the tow-headed, dead-shot Johnny.

Our whole party, headed by 'Dad,' Hall, the head sawyer, had exhausted every trick and artifice in vain attempts to open communication, until, finally, Johnny the hunter shot over a wiping stick from his big-bore, Mississippi yager, to the cleft in the head of which was attached a note scrawled upon an old bit of newspaper and wrapped up in a bit of buckskin.

There was a chorus of cheers as I read out the words, 'We have fifty fifty-pound bags of flour, our winter food. If you can find a place above you to cross the Soquel, we will pack the flour up there on our horses, and you can bring what you want down on your side. Somebody must go up the mountain, and come down along your side of the river. There may be a log jam or a bridge of trees somewhere. That's the only chance to get anything over to you. The creek will not be fordable for four weeks yet.'

It took us several hours to exchange our messages, and the whole circle gathered around the fire on that wild winter night, were busied with the selection of a first pioneer to reconnoitre the great canyon of the Soquel.

The twenty men were a strangely-assorted gang, though living in brotherly peace. The loggers and axemen were Maine and Michigan men. The teamsters were Missourians. An old ex-Frenchman Zouave, a cook of the same giddy race, and three or four mechanics, made

up a pretty fair lot of workmen. Even then, the fierce passions of the war were kindling bitter animosities. Big Jim Hall died later, a captain, before Atlanta, and the good-humoured young fellow who made me an expert trout catcher stole away to cross the Gali desert and become a bloodthirsty guerilla, whose very name made Union officers tremble behind their lines of sentinels.

The old cabin has crumbled to ruin, the very mills have disappeared, and the face of Nature is changed to-day—but on that March night of ‘sixty-two’ it was a Bret Harte throng which listened to every man’s proposals. The two great tables were cleared off; one was covered with old weeklies and the ‘illustrated journals,’ and at the other, a squad of the *élite* played euchre, and dropped a wisely put point now and then through the clouds of tobacco smoke. A hearty, cheery, good-humoured band of fellows they were, and not a blow nor a drunken spree had marked the past two years.

‘Long Eben’ Wright, the neatest axeman who ever dropped a two-hundred foot red-wood just on the line for loading, drawled out last, ‘Why don’t ye send him?’ pointing towards me with a calloused thumb. ‘He’s roved over every inch of these yere mountains; he’s feared o’ nothing. He’s strong and light o’ foot. He kin make the trip in half the time we heavier men kin. I suspicion we’ll all have to take the tramp, and each of us pack a sack of flour back on our shoulders. I carried one four hundred miles up the Fraser River in fifty-eight. I kin do it ag’in.’

‘Eben, ye’re right!’ said Big Jim Hall, refilling his pipe. ‘The boy must keep on the highest ground and skirt the whole river. I’m feared the river has cut into the banks along our side, so the horse could not get up along our side. Let him find a log jam or a tree bridge, even if it’s ten miles up. We must do something for the boss. He is ruined, as it is. We are eating him out of house and home.’

‘The Whites have got plenty of horses. If we find a place, they can pack ten or twenty sacks of flour up there, and I’ll marshal the hull detachment, and we will pack it down the ridge, and we can make a shift for three or four weeks more.’

‘Yes,’ said Billy James, ‘and the Whites can get down to Porter’s store at Soquel, and fetch us up some supplies. I vote that we all put in a month’s pay, and make a present of it to the boss, for our keep.’ The generous proposition was loudly applauded, and passed ‘*nem. con.*’

In half an hour I had received the personal counsels of the whole Log Cabin Club. My heart bounded with pride at being selected as the fitting one for the quest. A paternal sanction was easily gained, and the remainder of the evening was passed in preparations for an early departure.

The good-humoured help of the entire party was offered to me. A well-greased pair of logger’s boots, a double jeans hunting jerkin,

a pair of corduroy trousers were my climbing clothes, while a hunter's pouch carried ammunition, and a belt with revolver and bowie knife completed the outfit. My pride was at its height when Big Jim Hall said, 'You can take my Colt's revolving rifle.' This privilege had hitherto been denied me, and such deer, wild cats and coyote as I had killed, had been slaughtered with a beautiful old muzzle-loading Kentucky rifle, which I had learned to shoot with microscopic accuracy.

'Ye might run against something up there, boy,' kindly said Hall, as he tossed over the bullet moulds: 'Make up twenty or thirty slugs and bullets!' No happier lad was alive in all California's brown hills than I, as I knelt at the glowing hearth and turned out the slugs and round balls from the double mould. The bright-faced young fellow who helped me, in his cheery way, lived to fire more than the score of balls we cast into the hearts of the blue-clad soldiers, and poor, genial old Jim Hall, dozing over his paper, little dreamed

of the red death waiting him at Peach Tree Creek two years later.

The very first person awake on the water-beleagured delta was myself, and a score of affectionate suggestions followed me to the door, as I grasped the well-oiled Colt's rifle and cast a serious glance at the huge ridge towering above me, with its giant trees swaying loosely in the wet wind gusts. A good-bye to father and mother had been hastened with the wild unrest of a boyish heart, and it was on the threshold of the old cabin that Francois, the French Canadian cook, stopped me. 'S'pose you get ketched out over night—good thing to have some eat!' he cried, handing me a neat little haversack, made of a salt bag, and filled with the now precious cold biscuit and fried salt pork. His words seemed ominous, and I turned back to hide a box of matches in the inner pocket of my hunting shirt, having first dropped them in a light tin pepper-box.

In the grey light of the morning I strode

away, leaving the Log Cabin Club to their varied 'kill time' occupations. Some were making furniture, some hewing out ox yokes, others mounting powder horns, the Card Club was holding its never-ending session, and braiding whip lashes, buckskin tanning, fishing-rod making, and a dozen simple arts were all in vogue.

Before me lay a task of considerable difficulty. The wooded ridge rose to six or eight hundred feet, and ran along a half a mile to a bold, bald, round bluff of a thousand feet in height, this second ascent leading to a steep ridge four or five miles long, with gloomy plateaus of the heaviest and densest uncut timber, and then the great mountain rose sweeping far away, in rocky knolls and timbered patches, toward Loma Prieta, twenty miles away.

In the pride of my selection 'by unanimous consent,' I had dismissed all personal considerations. To be trusted, to be considered worthy of the unusual fatigue and the

responsibility, was in itself the honour of the whole writer's episode. And, with my rifle lightly poised, I clambered steadily along, under the swaying trees, until an hour's climbing brought me to the base of the great bald bluff.

The fact suddenly dawned upon me then, that mountain forays with Johnny White's cheerful face at my side were different from this lonely quest. For the woods were silent. No song of bird, no scream of jay, no chatter of cheerful squirrel enlivened the ghastly silence, broken now only by the sighing of the wind and the cold plash of showers of water, lightly shaken out from out the gusty pines. I had avoided the trail along the summit of the ridge, as I skirted the side low enough to keep the great yellow flood in sight, roaring along in the Soquel ravine below.

Great uprooted trees were to be seen whirled along on the wild flood like chips, and hastening shoreward with a velocity equal to that of

a fast steamboat. There was no sign of any log jam or crossing in the first two or three miles. My spirits sank as I neared the great bald bluff, and I experienced a distinct shock on gazing down into the trail which I had resumed, and observing the perfectly fresh tracks of a giant grizzly bear! Johnny White and myself had often debated the possibility of such a *rencontre*, and, with blanched cheeks, we had deferred the question of what we would do. But my teeth chattered as I observed the platter-shaped tracks a foot long, with the heel prints in the soft mud of the bare trail unaffected as yet, by the drizzling gusts. And the spoor was leading directly to the bluff I was to climb.

Then, with a surge away from the heart, my blood left me, and I realised that the grim forests were weird and lonely in all the desolation of the long-continued storm. A rising wind sent dried limbs dropping around in a shower, and I refuged near a huge trunk, whose burned-out cavity might have

invited me to rest longer but for that bear. It was now near nine o'clock, and I cautiously approached the cliff, rifle in hand, and at a ready I had a dozen times debated the idea of turning back, but the false pride of a hot-hearted boy restrained me. The side-hills were covered with rotten yellow-pine needles, my feet slipped from under me, and the seriousness of my quest came suddenly upon me. 'If'—but I dared not continue. The rain began to fall, and with my eye upon the painfully distinct grizzly tracks I approached the cliff.

Suddenly I paused in astonishment, for a gaping rocky chasm lay between me and the trail, which could be seen zig-zagging across the cliff, five hundred feet above. A giant landslide had carried the whole face of the bald mountain away eastwardly into Williams Creek, a thousand feet below. It was a case of 'No thoroughfare!' My only course was to drop down to the western side and skirt along the hill below the chasm, along the

Soquel, keeping its course in sight, and try to rise again to the ridge beyond the gaping chasm. To my inexpressible delight, the bear had turned off to the right and plunged down into the glen of Williams Creek, to which shades the acorns and wild cherries always invited *Ursus ferox Americanis*.

It was an hour later when I reached a jutting rock, a mile north of the break in the trail. I was beginning to feel chafed and wet through. The revolver belt and the two pouches galled me; the coveted beautiful six-shooting rifle was seemingly fifty pounds in weight. But I had given the grizzly the slip! I could see the whole course of the Soquel River, and, four or five miles to the north, I could see a dark line upon the yellow flood, which appeared to be stationary, and promised a gigantic jam of the great trees. Weak and weary, I struggled along, my mind fired with the hope of a final success. I had not seen a single animal. The grey skies were darkened, the cold gusts of rain drove in my

face, and I began to lose my nerve in the weird, ghastly forest. Keeping my eyes fixed on the point where I could see the black line of the log jam, I struggled along, not daring to confess that the place was at least ten miles from the mills. I began to sing, to talk to myself, to chatter, as I dragged along.

There were mis-steps which sent me sliding dozens of feet down the slippery hillsides. My hands were cold as ice, my brow burning, and as I at last consulted my watch, I found it was three o'clock before I had skirted the unfamiliar mountain side and arrived on the side of the third spur of mountain, abreast of the obstruction in the river, and about a thousand feet above it.

Ranging around till I found an open place in the trees, I gazed long and eagerly. There appeared to be fifty or more great trees, branches and all interlaced, making a practical crossing, the only one in ten miles. With a sinking heart I prepared to descend into the canyon of the Soquel, for I had suddenly

realised that I would not be able to retrace my steps before dark night. To travel the fearful road I had come was impossible, without all my energies and the clearest daylight, in fashion, for the forty days of the terrible visitation.

I stumbled along, weak and weary, determined to verify the fact of a practicable passage of the surging river below, and, casting my eyes about for some place to refuge myself during the night, I had frankly abandoned all ideas of personal bravery, and I deeply regretted my boyish foolishness. I had never listened to the suggestion of a careful soul that 'two heads were better than one,' and I felt singular demoralisation coming from my untried youth and the jarring solitude of the dismal woods. How gay in the hunting forays with Johnny White at my side were these now untenanted wastes! The possibility of meeting the giant grizzly on the ridge returned again and again. My limbs were stiff and sore, and I wondered if any prowling,

hunger-maddened animal could follow my trail over the moist ground.

But I hastened, before the shades of night fell, to examine the great log jam, now plainly visible. I would then return to the hillside, and, trying to find a hollow tree, make a store of dry branches for a fire to affright any hostile beast.

With nervous desperation I plunged down the hillside, and at last reached the gravelly banks fifty feet above the huge tangle of uprooted trees. Even in my growing demoralisation, I joyed to see that great trees, sweeping down in the current on either side, had interlaced their branches, and that other huge logs and uprooted trees in middle current, had formed a splendid and perfectly practicable crossing. One huge redwood bound the whole, its graceful green limbs arching in the air above the great red trunk.

I was anxious to verify the possibility of crossing, and to be able to report that I had been the only one of the beleaguered dwellers

on the delta to touch the farther shore of the Soquel in five long weeks, and so cautiously I climbed out, picking my way along over the raging flood, whose yellow surge tore past in angry white bubbling flakes of foam.

Not a bird, not a squirrel, not a single rabbit — nothing of life had I seen in the lonely day, save one great grey eagle wheeling his flight far above me, shining dark against the leaden, lowering clouds.

I was in mid-stream, parting the pliant branches with one hand, and still clutching the six-shooting rifle with the other, when I suddenly saw a huge yellow body parting the green redwood branches not ten yards from me.

A pair of glaring green eyes shone out, and the struggling animal crouched, vainly clutching at the greasy redwood bark for a spring.

One moment I gasped in the sudden surprise, and then I knew my foe, for I could see the white patch under the breast of the

huge California lion as it vainly essayed to spring.

There was no room for the giant feline to turn, and its feet were bruised and cut with the slippery, rain-drenched river gravel.

Holding the Colt's rifle steadily on the white breast patch, I fired, with the deliberation born of a thorough knowledge of my danger. The heavy ring of the rifle was answered by a scream of wild ferocity, as the big puma fell sideways and clutched desperately with its forepaws at the nearest limbs. I could see the whole broadside of the animal, and I steadily held on the white line under its sleek brown side, and then sent a second slug crashing into the quivering mass of sinews.

I stepped cautiously back as the animal tore and bit vainly at the sheathing bark of the great tree, then one huge paw relaxed, and the wounded beast clung desperately with the other. The rounded head was turned toward me, and I forgot to argue upon the possibility of the beast swimming!

I had revolved the barrel of the rifle for the third time, and I noted with joy that the brute seemed to be sinking lower in the water on the down-river side of the huge log. I drew up the gun and aimed directly behind the fore-shoulder. When the smoke cleared away, I saw once or twice the gleam of white and yellow, as the carcass was swiftly whirled away down stream.

Then, smitten with some sudden haste, I picked my way back to the eastern shore, without finishing the easy transit. There was yet light enough for me to follow my trail back to a bald point where a forest fire had hollowed out a dozen great redwoods still standing.

Within the hollows were pieces of burned branches and fragments. I cleared away the interior of one of these, and in half an hour had kindled a glowing fire. I selected strong branches and stones, with bits of rotted logs, to make me a breast-high barricade.

Reloading my rifle, I warmed the cold pork,

and divided my scanty store into two meals. Then, walking around my fire, I dried myself partly, and finally retired within the barricade which I had builded in front of my impromptu bedroom. The sigh of the night winds, the plash of the occasional rain, lulled me to sleep, and sheer fatigue overcame all my nervous scruples. It was long after daylight when I awoke, but I lost no time in hastening away on the return trip.

Munching my slender rations as I strode along, I marched with all the high pride of success in my lightening heels. The topographical experience of the day before enabled me to skirt the mountain sides at a reasonable distance above the chasms along the river, and gradually rise to the spinal ridge leading down to the V-shaped plateau within the two rivers.

Covered with ashes from my tree-hollow bed, weary, and yet triumphant, I dragged my tired feet down along the ridge to the sawmills, arriving about two o'clock. There was no fatted calf to kill, but my return prevented a

search party. The rifle line of signalling was soon set at work, and, two days later, the 'Castle Perilous' was relieved by means of the train of flour-carrying lumbermen. From that, till the end of the storm and the abating of the waters, the ordinary comforts of life were procured, and, in a month, the floods left us, the stern struggle against financial ruin supplanting the grim possibilities of starvation.

My yellow-coated friend, the giant puma, was discovered, in a decidedly damaged condition and very much the worse for wear, when the waters receded, the carcass being entangled in a drift some five miles below where he gave me decidedly the most awkward meeting of my life.

THE POOL OF DEATH

IN thirty years of varied experience, I do not remember any portion of the 'deserts wild and antres vast' which I have roved over as repugnant to me as the regions of Colon, Mosquito, and Olancho, in Spanish Honduras. Six months of the year eighteen hundred and ninety, wasted in climbing the terrific spurs of the Carpamento and Silaco Mountains in search of gold, have cured me, for life, of the *aura sacri fames*.

The arid valleys between the mountain ranges were glowing furnaces, and the gloomy tropical forest between the Rio Negro and the lonely Aguan, was haunted with varying horrors. The Atlantic coast of Spanish Honduras, from Puerta Barrios to Cape Gracias á Dios, presents a line of steaming lagoons with a fringe of

banana, cocoa-nut and pine-apple plantations. Bold mountains are barriers to the interior, and the lonely, silent rivers are only traversed by the dug-out of the barbarous natives. No wheeled vehicle can be used for inland journeys; the horse is almost useless, and diminutive, but wonderfully reliable mules are the only means of transport for man and merchandise.

Scattered along the coast are squalid towns—old Truxillo and Omoa alone recall the days of the Conquistadores, with their ruined Spanish fortifications. There is no gun mounted to-day on the superb old castle of Amoa, and the gigantic iguana lizard comfortably nests in the few old bronze cannon still pointing seaward at Truxillo. It was upon the public square of this decayed ante-colonial city, that I rallied my party for a voyage into the gloomy gorges of the Mangalile Mountains. The fact that my illustrious compatriot, William Walker, had been shot there with hospitable promptness, was a prophecy of the mingled reserve, aversion and treachery with which I

found the whole people tainted. The official half-caste Honduraneans, the Mestizos, the degraded interior Indians, and the white refugees of a dozen countries, made up an unlovely human show, in which there was no promise of any survival of the fittest. The coal-black Caribs alone, seemed in the main to be sober, civil and reliable. The most daring boatmen of the whole world, the most adroit fishermen, and the masters of the cutting and loading of all tropical fruits, this singular people never go inland, and their farthest range is limited by the length of a day's canoe journey up and down the innumerable watery openings into the tropical jungle of the great, gloomy Atlantic forests. The Carib's foot is always in touch with the seashore. From his villages he goes out boldly to reap the harvest of the fisheries, disdaining cyclone and storm, fearless amid the raging waves. Seated in a little canoe, dug out of a single log, paddle in hand, the hardy Carib pilot will board a thousand-ton steamer

laughingly, when the bravest white man dares not lower a boat.

Strange people, guiltless of the traveller's blood, bearing no weapons, they have mystic secrets of their own which none may gain for money. Snake-charming, voodoo arts, charms and love - potions, strange customs speaking of old Africa and the Niger, are theirs, and they live at peace with all along the eight-hundred-mile coast.

Their houses are neat, their villages clean and even prosperous-looking; their stately, coal-black women are industrious and modest, and always clad in gleaming, spotless white. The Christian cross is hung upon the women's necks, and, rich in fish and poultry, the smaller animals, with store of cassava bread, the housekeeping is far from despicable. Honduras, stretching to the Pacific Ocean, has but one port and a small strip of sea-board on the west, and only from Tegucigalpa, its mountain capital, to the Pacific, a certain prosperity reigns. The great triangle

facing the Atlantic is, in the main, a gloomy and unfrequented jungle. The Caribs penetrate but a few miles into the interior on their banana-cutting forays, or in search of a huge cedar tree, from a section of which a splendid canoe, sometimes forty feet long, is made from one log by burning out and trimming.

Returning with this easily gotten vessel, at the seashore the hardy Carib builds on upper works, masts and rigs it, and often produces a vessel fit to voyage as far as the Bahamas.

Leaving these quaint and worthy simple folk with two white companions, and several muleteers and natives, I departed for the head waters of the Aguan. The lazy, dreamy old city of Truxillo, lying under the shadows of Congrehoy, was repulsive with its squalid adobes, its dirty, frowsy soldiers, its lurking vagabonds, its limp, insolent, half-caste women. When not stealing out in the black manta, to linger like dejected crows around an old tumble-down church on the plaza, these listless children of sloth were idly swinging in the hammock, or

seated on a horse or ox skull, combing their stringy, raven hair.

In a climate of enervating tropical heat, varied with terrific storms, with its social life punctuated by occasional sweeping visitations of Yellow Jack and recurrent tragedies, the men lazy, vicious and listless, the women without education, art or occupation, the old community slowly rots along to the last limit of social decay. Everything seems to have relaxed ; neither government, creed, faith, nor even personal ambition, lifts up the dull level of Honduran squalor.

Down from the plateau, where every ragged tatterdemalion was a Don Luis or Don Sebastian, where every bare-footed wearer of a single garment was Señora Mercedes, or Donna Isabel, our little cavalcade dragged away in the glaring sun, past the prosperous Carib town, to enter, after a journey on the beach of a half-dozen miles, the gloomy gorge leading into the defiles of the great mountain range, separating us from the vast inland

wilderness of the Aguan and Rio Negro Valleys beyond. There were two or three steamers visible as I lost the blue sea from my sight. Steamers from New Orleans and Baltimore and Mobile, lying there till the hardy Caribs would assemble, at different landings along the coast, enough cocoa-nuts, half-ripe pine-apples, and yet green bananas to keep the doctors of a dozen Northern cities in ecstasies for weeks in the 'near future.' The silver half-dollars paid to the Caribs, and the purchase price of fruit, furnish nearly all the money current along the whole Mosquito Coast. Hides, sarsaparilla root and vine, deer and goat-skins, being the only output of Spanish Honduras, save mahogany and logwood in decreasing quantities. I gazed back at Hog Island, the first point where Columbus sighted the mainland of America, and muttered a good-bye as we left the sweltering beach. The usual first day's mishaps had broken all our tempers. Packs overturning, fractious mules, stupid mozos,

one cowardly servant deserting in fear of the unknown terrors of a three-weeks' inland march, and all the shaking down of a 'pulling out,' made the three Americans grumpy. We plunged into a dim defile and began to ascend the scarped mountains leading to the interior Aguan Valley, and the path led along the trail of Cortez's slaves.

The little mules hopped from step to step cut in the rocks, and after dizzying ourselves with glances down into the sheer canyons, along which we picked our way, we closed our eyes, held on to the saddles, and let the mules guard their own lives as well as those of their riders.

Chill airs drew under the huge forest trees, and as we were dripping from the solar broiling of the long ride along the beach, manifold insects of Honduran strangeness settled upon the exposed parts of our bodies, buzzing, biting, nipping, burrowing and stinging. We knew that 'all men were liars' as to the hundred varying accounts of the three-

hundred-mile forest route we were to traverse, but they all agreed in truth as to the 'insectivora' of the interior. Sandflies, chigoes, garrapatos, mosquitoes, red ants, white ants, and everything with legs, wings and arms cheered us on our way

The evening shades descended as we reached the summit at Bella Vista and had one last peep of a distant sapphire streak. The three voyagers on the golden quest had been initiated into the delights of dragging the mules up the steeper places, and crawling along, encumbered with spurs, revolvers, bowie knives, clattering canteens, Winchester rifles, and all the impedimenta of the fool's voyage into Wonderland.

I can recall now, with evident shame, my internal soliloquy as I began to see the delights in store ahead. In three weeks, to cross nine ranges of mountains, swim and ford a dozen rivers and have the horrors of a ten days' jungle trip, the wiles of the wild Olancheros, and the possibilities of throat-cutting by the

Rio Negro and Patuca Indians. All this loomed up suddenly, and only the coward pride of an Americano kept my face turned to the West. I should have turned back, for I shed my good boots, my temper, nearly all my skin, my good money, and scattered my personal belongings in a wasteful castaway manner for three months, gladly giving or throwing away the last when I leaped aboard a little sloop on my return, to sail out to the Caribbean Islands and catch a fruit schooner destined to drop me at the South Ferry in the City of New York, the home of every giddy pleasure.

My envy of the bare-legged *mozos* running along, clad only in a *degagé* shirt and raw-hide sandals, cigarette in mouth, and machête in hand, was suddenly chilled as we were stopped in our single file descent by a particularly vicious-looking *fer de lance* snake, about six feet long. I was aware that these insidious ophidians amiably took a yellow colour in ripe banana bunches, a brown shade on logs and

leafy mould, a green one among branches and foliage, and were deadly in their freely-offered poison. Only the Caribs seem to have guarded the secret of an antidote to these bites, and we had no Carib Indian with us.

In the huddle, the frightened muleteers and mozos allowed the three Americanos to practise on the defiant *fer de lance* with three revolvers, a rifle and a shot-gun, and the vicious reptile was twisting and squirming long after the brave Honduraneans had clubbed the remains of him soundly. A veteran plainsman—a Sioux fighter—had shot Mr Fer de Lance into three or four lengths. The city gentleman divided him again, and I then blew him into pieces about the convenient size of Frankfurters.

When we had urged our little cavalcade of seven mules by his battleground, the woods were vocal with all kinds of discordant shrieks. Animals, small and large, seemed to slip around in a profusion suggesting the Wolf's Glen in 'Der Freischütz.' Screaming parrots,

yelling macaws, the distant sounds of jackal, jaguar, peccary and wild turkey mingled with the plaintive call of the 'trujillo' bird, whose strange cry recalled the droning town we had left.

Hares, grouse, partridges and fat-breasted orioles abounded, and the chatter of a dozen tribes of monkeys down by the streams wafted us on our way. The mules stepped on little, lazy armadilloes, rattling along in horny coats of mail; and an assortment of lizards, from four inches to four feet long, took note of our movements. The camp that night was a funereal one. Coffee, some cold provender, and the slinging of the little canvas hammocks tied on behind our saddles, were our only restorers, and then each man fought his own crop of attached insects, and tried to sleep in the simoom breath of a tropical night.

Experience led me to be comfortable in the little canvas trough later, and to regard boots and a belt, with revolver and bowie knife, as mere trifles in a night toilet. We all became

used to every kind of yell, shriek and howl, the browning cuticle at last ceased to pain us when the Honduranean insect burrowed into the poison skin, and a social and physical numbness prepared me for the later delights of travelling one hundred and twenty miles upon two raw eggs and three half-roasted plantains as rations.

But for the pipe and a few handfuls of tobacco, the relator would have surely left his cadaver to the peccaries, on a return, five weeks later, alone, save for two hostile, would-be cut-throats, over the yet unknown horrors of the Mangalile trail.

We had passed one little town, and it was a week later that we found ourselves camping in the heart of the vast malarial, gloomy wilderness of the upper bend of the great Aguan River. We were pretty well aware that nothing could increase the miseries of the opening week of a most wasteful phase of all our lives, but in the little intervals of open ground we could see rising, afar now, the

terrific battlements of the mountain ranges we were doomed to drag our fever-weakened bodies over on a bootless errand. It was no comfort to us to know that Cortez had lost three hundred of his bravest cavaliers in these same terrific gorges ; but when our flatly mutinous muleteers demanded rest, and the animals were ready to break down, we camped in the heart of the trackless forest which had entrapped us.

We had gone on beyond all signs of the lazy Honduraneans, and only a few squalid mountain Indians passed us, in fear and trembling. The sound of our guns alarmed them, for we made free with the abundant game. The poor wretches, staggering along under the weight of eighty pounds of twisted sarsaparilla roots, were travelling two hundred miles to the sea to barter it for liquor, a little cloth and a few trinkets.

In our temporary camp we remained several days. The hammocks were slung to trees cleared of all branches. A fire brightly burn-

ing frightened away the dangerous animals at night, a dozen smudges killed some of the insects, and we had cleared the ground of scorpions, tarantulas and other poisonous vermin. Two or three circles of horsehair lariats were stretched to prevent snakes crossing the elastic barrier, and we rested in a sullen inertia of ugly discontent.

Pouring rain on the march, terrible tropical thunderstorms of exceptional violence, and the murky, miasmatic heat under the enormous trees had hardened us to the amplitude of physical suffering awaiting us.

Gigantic trees, three hundred feet high, towering around us were the nests of clouds of glossy-black, rose-beaked oriole toucans, with golden epaulettes. At dawn, magnificent flights of macaws and flamingoes made the sky one mass of moving colour. Great monkeys lived high up in these giant trees, while the gum trees and cedars, with the mahogany and ceiba trees, had another monkey population living a hundred feet below, with game birds

and squirrels as their mates. Huge roots ran out as buttresses from the ceiba trees, and trailing from the branches of the lower foliage, the tracery of tropical vine and flowering plants was impenetrable. Ten feet away from the trail we chopped out a man was invisible.

The rarest orchids by thousands bloomed around us, as parasites on the trunks of huge trees from fifteen to twenty feet in diameter.

The secret of our muleteers' mutiny was found soon to be a little hidden village of half-caste mestizos hovering near a great pool in the forest, from which a slender rivulet, not six inches deep, trickled down to the morasses and swamps, flooded with rank black poisonous water from the overflowing windings and bends of the huge Aguan. The men of this squalid little camp of indigenes were absent hunting sarsaparilla, cutting logwood, shooting jaguars, or collecting gorgeous birds' wings for the lovely daughters of Eve in Paris, London and New York, and our muleteers made free

with our tobacco, panocha cake sugar, coffee, and, in fact, all stealable articles. This tribute was used to insure them a welcome among the half-starved forest dwellers, and fandango and festa went on, while we, the gringo greenhorns, were hunting, quarrelling or picking out a few samples of the three or four hundred insects every one of us carried around.

The great black pool was the most considerable body of water seen in two or three days' march, and, morning and evening, deer, jaguars, droves of peccary and many uncouth animals boldly emerged from the circling forest shades to slake their thirst in its never-failing waters.

At the lower end of this pool, where the rivulet trickled forth, a few heavy stones had been rolled together, with here and there a rough wooden platform. To this place the dozen or more women of the little village would repair to wash their primitive costumes. It was the one mark of social civilisation in the village of thatched palm huts, where a mud bake-oven for cassava bread, a single iron pot,

a few chickens and a few earthen dishes, with a half-dozen knives, forks and spoons, made up the whole personal property. Even the hammocks were twisted of the fibres of the forest vines.

It was by a delegation of the ladies of this most unfashionable summer resort that we were requested to rid them of some unknown monster which had devoured several of the children, left playing and sprawling around the banks of the Pool of Death while the mothers were washing. Even one old woman, who had lain down for a siesta, had bodily disappeared. One native hunter, who was possessed of an old pot-metal shot-gun, had vainly watched over a yelping puppy tied to a stake near the Pool of Death. No jaguar, puma, or wolf, no animal of known ferocity, was potted by him.

We were inclined to think that this was a story of our muleteers, who passed the days enjoying roast monkey, stewed iguana and baked plantain with these simple villagers.

But the howls of the women, approaching our camp in a body, touched us, when we found that a little boy of three had been lost, in the daytime, after being left playing on the bank of the mysterious pool. A long night's vigil of three hunters, each with a 'mozo,' resulted in nothing save the shooting of a stray jaguar, a couple of fat deer, and the amusing adventure of the plainsman, who was nodding at his post. In the dead hours of the night a couple of wolves came bounding down to the bank, chasing a dark-coloured animal, almost as large as a young ass. Plunging and wallowing along through the dense underbrush, the maddened animal came rushing on, and, pausing but a moment on the bank to shake off its vulpine pursuers, plunged boldly into the dark waters of the silent Pool of Death.

The startled plainsman had only time to roll over one of the wolves with a Winchester bullet, the other escaping, when he gazed out on the star-lit surface of the Pool of Death to

mark the reappearance of the strange animal which had sought relief in boldly hurling itself into the black waters.

‘That’s a queer sort of a jackass,’ mused the plainsman. ‘Won’t he ever come up? I wonder if he walks on the bottom of the lake?’ With his rifle cocked, and revolver ready, he awaited some sign of the return of the frightened animal. ‘I wonder if he has committed suicide?’ mused the hardy American plainsman. ‘Jackasses that navigate like this would be valuable to Barnum.’

And he suddenly drew back, rifle in hand, as the waters parted near him, and the ungainly animal tried feebly to mount the bank.

‘By Jove! It’s a huge tapir!’ suddenly reflected the rifleman, who had knocked over dozens of bear, buffalo, elk and black-tail deer, but had, so far, never been vouchsafed a pop at *Tapirus Americanis*. ‘I’ll let him get up the bank and save the wolves the trouble of killing him. I want to see what he is like with his taper four toes in front,

and tapering off to three toes behind. I've got him sure, now. He's very weak.'

The plainsman was about to draw a bead, when, with an unwilling struggle, the tapir was suddenly drawn back under the black water, the boiling foam and bubbles indicating a terrible struggle of some kind.

A careful search by daylight disclosed nothing but the dead wolf to add to the night's bag of the jaguar and the two fat deer. But the irritated plainsman was determined to investigate the contents of the Pool of Death. 'Gentlemen,' he said, after the three men had taken a turn around the Pool of Death, and killed monkeys and iguanas enough for the men's larder for a couple of days, 'the inhabitant of that black hole stole my tapir, and—he went where the missing pickaninnies and the venerable old lady went to. I propose to get even!'

At noon, after carefully watching the pool all the morning, the plainsman sounded the depths of the pool by throwing in stones, with

cork buoys tied to them with long strings. He found that the deepest place was about twenty feet, and in the middle, easily reachable by tossing any object from the bank, about half way up the long side of the pond.

The whole population of 'Ciudad Perdida' was gathered around the bank, and the two other Americans were on hand, with their guns ready, as the plainsman lashed three full sticks of giant powder together, and, carefully capping them, cemented the fuses, cutting them about ten feet long.

Attaching the projectile to a good - sized stone, the plainsman, with a few cautionary words, hurled the explosive agent well out into the middle of the black Pool of Death.

There was silence for twenty seconds, and then a huge column of mud, water, drifted leaves, sticks, and even a good-sized log was thrown up fifty feet into the air. Huge boiling ripples of blackened mud waves lapped the shores, and, with exclamations of disappointment, the whole dwellers in the 'lost

city,' as well as the travellers, circulated around the banks of the Pool of Death.

'It's a very strange thing,' said the plainsman; 'whoever got my tapir has nailed him down, and crawled into some hole. That triple explosion would have killed an elephant!' There was a shout from a frightened mozo.

Drifting slowly down to the mouth of the little rivulet was the body of a huge, loathsome alligator, the shallow waters dyed with its escaping blood. Dragged out in triumph, the great saurian was found to be burst open for three feet under its right side. A fusillade of rifle balls ended its career, for the formidable tail was still writhing in the death agonies. The grisly monster was nearly twenty feet in length.

'*There,*' proudly cried the plainsman, 'is the fellow who was, slowly but surely, depopulating "*Ciudad Perdida!*"' He proceeded to catechise the frightened women, and found that, two seasons before, the

Aguan River had flooded the whole forest. 'He was left up here in shallow water when the waters receded,' said the triumphant hunter, 'and, craftily hiding, being made desperate with hunger, he slyly watched for whom he might devour. He got my tapir—and—I got him.'

Followed by the blessings of the rejoicing women, the three Americans broke camp, and toiled on toward the awful gorges of the Mangalile River.

THE PIRATE OF WILLIAMS LANDING

THERE was no period of the war a more dismal one for the loyal citizens of the Pacific coast than the winter of 'sixty-two.' The general reverses to the Union arms had dispirited the supporters of the Federal Government, and the 'coast' was practically cut off from the loyal East. Oregon, Washington, Nevada and Arizona were thinly populated. The Indians of the great plains romped freely over the Northern Overland Mail Route, Arizona was under the heel of Texan raiders, and—there was no railroad in those days.

The population of California, then the great treasure-house of a tottering Federal Government, was about evenly divided between the North and South. With a wondrous sa-

gacity, President Lincoln only drew about fifteen thousand men from California to re-open the Northern Overland Route, garrison the coast forts, and drive back Sibley's raiders from Arizona.

And, all too late, the Southern men of the Pacific coast saw how an easy prey had slipped from their hands. The same tactics which gave over the Federal troops in Texas, under General Twiggs, to the Confederacy would have given the Richmond Government the army and navy supplies, the Mare Island Navy Yard, the Benicia Arsenal, the coast forts and all the movable munitions of war. It would have been easy to hold the mints and gold mines, and to divert the treasure which bolstered up the Lincoln Government into Jeff Davis's hands *viâ* Acapulco and Chihuahua.

The French, then in Mexico, would have gladly aided the Southerners, and it would have taken years to send out Union troops to regain California.

Two things saved California and the coast to the Union. First, the leading Southerners were easy-going landowners, politicians and professional men. They never believed the North would fight, and were not as eager to raise a local storm as they should have been in their own interest. The banks, telegraphs, mails and business houses, with the merchant shipping, were in the hands of loyal Northern men, who at once became business agents of the Washington Government.

When the tide of victory in 'sixty-two' seemed to have set toward the Southern banners, the Secessionists of the Pacific coast woke up and began secret operations. Numbers of their boldest and bravest hastened East to fight with Sidney Johnston and Stonewall Jackson.

But the weakness of the American Union at sea was at once apparent in the easy depredations of the *Sumter*, the *Alabama*, the *Georgia*, the *Tallahassee*, the *Florida*, the *Chicamunga*, and the subsequent adventures

of the ram *Stonewall*, and the *Shenandoah*, which destroyed our Pacific whaling fleet.

Had the Southern Government sent early in the war a couple of good cruisers to the broad Pacific, they would have terrorised California, whose heavy freights came around Cape Horn, ravaged the fleet of Pacific Mail gold-carrying mail steamers, and swept all American commerce from the western ocean. There was nothing to prevent this, as the safe homeward voyage of the *Shenandoah* from the Arctic, after the war, proved, when she dodged a victorious navy of a thousand vessels.

But, in the winter of 'sixty-two,' the two parties in California began to crystallise into fierce little knots. There were those vague, indefinable rumours that 'something was going to happen,' which indicated a tardy activity on the part of the boldest men who ever drew sword in a civil war. Why they did not act sooner will always remain a puzzle to the historian. The real reason probably was, that with 'Stonewall Jackson' in the valley, and

Lee, already laurel-crowned, there was over-confidence at Richmond as to conquering an early peace.

Neither Grant, Sherman, Thomas, M'Pherson or Sheridan had fully blossomed out into acknowledged heroes as yet, while the Southern laurels were in full bloom on many a brow.

The Union men of California organised Union Leagues, which secretly co-operated with the civil and military authorities, and no one was admitted, unless under the scrutiny of men who marked every action of the candidate. These leagues were well supplied with money by the business men. They had free use of the mails and telegraph, and were in secret league with the police and provost-marshals. They drilled and had private neighbourhood rallying plans; they had arms and munitions, and could get more freely.

On the other hand, the 'Jeff Davis men'—the Knights of the Golden Circle, and the so-called 'Copperheads'—dared not openly assemble. They were forced to act like men

under the ban, for an incautious 'Hurrah for Jeff Davis' brought the excited revolutionists very soon to Alcatraz Island, engaged in wheeling rocks under the eyes of a Yankee sentinel.

There was a brooding quiet, but much concealed ugliness, and sporadic 'shooting scrapes' usually settled the friction at the angry points of touch. Every one went armed, the Union League rooms were all guarded, and the slightest suspicious act on any Southern man's part caused him to be pounced on.

It was too late to make the grand *coup*, but not too late to do something effective. A few daring Southerners supplied money, and others brains, and young hot-heads were ready to make the 'break.' But the 'break' had to be made with due regard to the inexhaustible amount of 'rock work' ready at Alcatraz, and the growing grip of the Federal authorities.

Secret service men were scattered all over

the coast. The revenue cutters watched Puget Sound, the Columbia River, and the northern California ports were filled with loyal, hardy lumbermen, and a chain of Union Leagues swept all along to San Diego.

There were troops at Los Angeles and San Diego. San Francisco was only guarded by cutters and one or two refuse naval vessels, together with a monitor, then in the bottom of the harbour!

But the forts and arsenals were strongly held. Only a lonely strip of coast from Pescadero down to San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara offered a hiding-place to fit out a staunch little privateer to capture one of the weak Pacific Mail steamers. Taking one of these, then lying in wait for another three millions in gold, and two great ships would reward a good boarding dash. Mexico was at hand, but the ports there and at Panama were watched by our consuls and the secret service spies. The sole precaution, taken very late in the war, was to put a

volunteer officer, forty men, and one light gun on each of the great treasure argosies. And this 'stable door' expedient was brought about by two daring attempts to begin a little privateering on the Pacific.

Public rumour had crystallised upon some such attempt, and also an organised system of robbing the great treasure carryalls of Wells, Fargo & Co., who brought, in coaches and stages, the golden bars in from the whole Pacific coast. There were only two little strips of railroad on the Pacific coast then, neither over thirty miles long.

A foolhardy young fellow, becoming intoxicated, was caught in the interior with a uniform of the C.S.A., a commission as a lieutenant of the Southern army, and the stage and land treasure-raids were rendered impossible. For the whole plan leaked out by the imprudence of this ardent young pioneer of the sword.

He was hustled away somewhere, and indulged in a long period of judicious retirement.

But the naval operations were really creeping along. There were several lonely little landings between San Francisco and Monterey which really offered a snug hiding-place for a privateer. Santa Cruz and Monterey were open roadsteads, and there were custom-houses and strong Union Leagues at both places. Every vessel on the Pacific coast was watched in its ownership, and transfers were jealously guarded.

Above Santa Cruz, between it and Pescadero, were two or three lonely landings where only lime in barrels and lumber, were shipped from the forest hills of the towering coast range. And as many as a dozen fleet schooners, some of them of two or three hundred tons, plied to these out-of-the-way spots, doing a thriving business in carrying material for the San Francisco market. There were no custom-houses or officers at these insignificant landings, and at one of them several very fine schooners were owned by the brother of a man who became one of the

most renowned of the Southern privateer captains.

In that immediate region a scattered population of about a thousand was quite 'solidly secesh' — to use the phrase of those days. And into this region few Union men ventured alone. Constable, sheriff, tax-collector, and assessor of Abe Lincoln's new taxes gave it a very wide berth.

The audacious capture of the Pacific Mail Steamers' liner *Ariel* by the *Alabama*, on November 18, 1862, in the Atlantic, showed how easily a great, weak mail steamer, loaded with non-combatants, would succumb. There were busy brains pondering over this problem on the Santa Cruz coast, and men who roundly cursed the captain of the *Alabama* for taking an empty steamer, bound from New York down to Aspinwall, instead of the gold-laden mate, which came up, two days later, with two millions of gold aboard, on the same route.

But from the Santa Cruz coast of Cali-

fornia, the out-going treasure-laden Pacific Mail steamers, bound from San Francisco to Panama, could be seen any fair day as they slanted down the coast, shaving Monterey point close. And an elaborated plan was ready—the only thing was to get the vessels and the guns. The men, a hundred hardy riflemen, whose boarding bravery would easily do the trick—could be had in the disloyal legion referred to.

I was in those days a very ardent sportsman, a hardy rider, and from Santa Cruz as a central point, had hunted and fished over the whole coast range of the country. The easy freemasonry of the chase, and a policy of backsheesh as to sporting gear and ammunition, made me hail-fellow-well-met with the good-humoured Southern lads of even this disgruntled region. I was an ardent young ‘Union Leaguer,’ and being vicariously drilled as a possible recruit in a Santa Cruz military company. At seventeen, I was able to handle a fourteen-pound

Harper's Ferry musket with more or less dexterity.

The only suspicious movement of the Southerners near us had been the sudden disappearance in the night, during the winter of 'sixty-two,' of a very excellent thirty-two pounder, which was a trophy of the capture of Monterey by Commodore Sloat. This gun was the pride of the citizens of Santa Cruz, and was our local standby. In some mysterious manner it disappeared, and, as far as this deponent knoweth, has never turned up since. The circumstance was a fortunate one, for it put every Union man in the county upon his mettle, and much neighbourhood spying was the result.

I enjoyed the close acquaintance of the Collector of the Port—a fine young man, a prominent Union Leaguer, and one who made a brave and gallant officer in the field later. I was privately requested, as a sort of leader among the lads of the whole region for fifty miles around, to watch every one of

my young Southern cronies for any possible bragging as to where that gun went.

There was a shock-haired friend of mine, a youth of eighteen, who lived near Williams Landing, one of these lonely little ports about sixteen miles north of Santa Cruz. He was of Southern parentage and lived 'up Williams Creek.' We had been greatly drawn to each other in sundry mussel-gathering raids, in trips shooting sea lions and hair seals along the lonely coast. He had taught me how to find store of great sea fish trapped at low tide in the jagged holes of the rocky bench. We had 'plastered' the ducks and curlew and wild geese together. His people were land rich and money poor, and on his visits to Santa Cruz he 'struck me' when short of pocket money. I regarded this good-natured oaf as the greatest 'all round' man whom I had ever met. His wood lore was equal to his open country work and his beach-combing. An athlete and a child of nature, 'nothing fazed him,' and so, when

in the early spring of 'sixty-three' he gave me a rough invitation to visit his ranch, I saddled up my horse.

I left my gun, for he confided to me, in return for a lot of fishing gear, that he had struck the greatest hole for trout that was known in the whole coast range, and he had not given this momentous secret away. I was bent only on sport as we rode along, and it was toward evening when we rode up to Williams Landing, a little port which I had never seen.

Four miles above it, on a considerable creek, was this hospitable Arkansas youth's family headquarters. I stood and gazed in surprise at the high rocky bluff, nearly a hundred feet high, with a great longitudinal fissure enabling the largest schooner to lie within the rectangular chasm in smooth, oily water. There was a conformation of the coast which made this almost land - encircled nook safe for schooners to lie at anchor, and I noticed a splendid schooner lying buoyed out in the

open there, while another, her tall topmasts not reaching to the rocky bluffs, was moored in the chasm with side lines. Two powerful steam engines, with the very heaviest tackle, were loading the vessel below with huge clumps of barrelled lime and great bunches of sawed lumber. The grey, oily waves heaved the kelp outside, the sea bird flew along at the level of our feet, and the blue ocean stretched out, a sapphire zone, to where we could see the great steamers pointing down the coast for Panama. I watched the lime and lumber coming down the ravines on a rough wooden track train-way by gravity, and, admiring the whole affair, politely declined to go down to the schooner below in a cage. Far down, on the rocky ledges of the chasm, where shelves had been blasted out, I could see great masses of freight and boxed machinery for the dozen or more saw-mills, then engaged in ruining the magnificent, never-to-be-replaced redwood forests. There were only a few rough-looking workmen

around. No one lived there, except, in a couple of cabins, the operating force who worked this enormous loading and unloading machinery. It was the only place where a safe landing could be had and heavy material handled in fifty miles.

For loneliness, it left nothing to be desired. We rode away up the incense-breathing redwood canyons, and, before the stars were out, our horses were comfortably stabled, and I had been hospitably received by the kindly old mother of my friend. A great rambling old frontier farmhouse, with lean-to's and extensions, was hidden in a beautiful creek bottom, encircled with huge barns, and evidence of much easily-gotten gear in flocks and herds. For the lands of the clan were princely in extent, bought from the old Spaniards for a song. The two or three brothers and sisters of younger years avoided us, and I was treated with the usual Southern hospitality due to a stranger boy. It was

the custom there for lads to exchange these informal hospitalities without let or hindrance.

I was thinking of nothing but the famous trout pool, and, not long after daybreak, we had been regaled with bacon and eggs, coffee and biscuit, and, saddling up, we ascended the wild glen several miles. It was the time of life's ambrosial morning, and a wilder scene of beauty never met my eyes than that lonely canyon on the Santa Cruz hills. Quail whirred away before us with stormy burst, the grey squirrel chattered in the trees, the hare fled before us, and the big, blue pigeons hovered around all defiant of our innocent fishing poles.

But when we tied our horses behind a great clump of laurel, and I was cautiously led to an overhanging rock, I saw below me a great boiling black pool, hollowed out by a perpendicular waterfall dropping twenty feet over a ledge of hard rock

that the stream could not wear away. The pool was some two hundred feet in diameter. 'They're in there, dead oodles of them,' gasped my friend. I was the monopolist of the excursion, for I had paid in advance, and he was pledged not to fish. I can never forget the thrill with which I saw a great trout rise instanter at my first cast. I forgot all my surroundings for the next thirty minutes, for I had landed nineteen superb brook trout, weighing, when cleaned, twenty-seven pounds. 'Now, that's enough for once,' exclaimed the 'proprietor.' I don't want no one ever to know, but you and I, what fish is in the pool.'

And, though excited and elated with the electric dash of the splendid imprisoned fish, I was forced to discontinue. The creek ran out of the boiling pool in a thin shallow of low sandy beach, and the beautiful captives there were fattened with store of worm and grub and butterfly brought down by the current. I never

saw such a fishing pool before, nor, this one since !

As we slowly retraced our way to the ranch we laid out a quail and squirrel hunt, and I was a tired and happy sportsman as we returned, laden with game, after dark. I had packed my fish with care in two saddle-bags, with grass and cool leaves, and I regretted the long foray of the day which prevented me from riding home to Santa Cruz.

The family had dined when we returned, and the Chinese cook set out the remains of the dinner for us without a word. We made a hearty meal, and I was just finishing the evening toilet of my horse, when one of the youngsters came down and called my companion, who was attending to his own favourite animal. The heir of a great estate, he came and went as he listed, ignorant of school and growing up as wild as a young Scythian. He came running back, and, saddling his horse in a

jiffy, cried, 'I've got to go on a message for the old man! It's fifteen miles to Sayante, and it'll be long after midnight when I get back. You must go to my room and turn in.'

I smoked a surreptitious pipe in the corral, and, finally becoming lonely, wandered into the house, and, throwing off my clothes, went to sleep in the youth's room. I was awakened in a couple of hours by loud and earnest talking. I could hear the shuffling of feet, the clinking of glasses, and, to my astonishment, there seemed to be forty or fifty men gathered in the great living rooms of the ranch house. I crept to the door of my darkened room, which was a little ajar, and saw that a hardy band of frontiersmen were crowded into the house. With a trembling hand, I closed the little door tightly and turned the button of the simple fastening. Soon the bottle circulated, and shouts and cries rose which told me that I was a secret

witness of a meeting of the Knights of the Golden Circle. I examined the little room on the first floor and found that there was a window which I could slip out of, and friendly shrubbery to cover me. I dared not move around, and so I lay quiet and heard the hidden story of the splendid schooner lying at the buoy outside.

There were sailors and men to be picked for her from the fleet of the mill owners. There were people who were to come to take her out to sea, and there was 'heavy machinery' and 'boxed iron castings,' which would be loaded by means of the powerful hoisting machinery. I found out soon where the stolen cannon had gone. It was hidden somewhere, ready to be placed upon the schooner. And, bit by bit, the whole outfit was being got together for a heavy armament of the schooner I had seen. The men were to secretly assemble, and, when all was ready, the peaceful-looking boat would stand out into the track of the

Pacific Mail steamers. A false deck cargo of light lumber would conceal the gun, and, with a reversed flag, the sign of distress, the steamer would be halted, and, between boarding tactics and the guns, the gold shipment was to be secured. Men were to be put aboard the outgoing steamer as steerage passengers, who would spring to arms and aid in the capture.

I might have heard more, but I crept into my clothes, and, dropping out of the window, found my way down to the barn. In ten minutes I was stealing down the glen, for I had no trouble in leaving the house surrounded with forty or fifty horses tied to the shade trees. I had a very good excuse for a lonely boy's idea of riding home, but a better one burned in my bosom. The moment the glen widened I rode off the road, and soon was working my way down the coast road. No one at the ranch knew whence I came, none whither I had gone, save the lad, who sagely concluded that I had got tired and gone home. I was

too stunned and excited to take any unusual precautions save riding off the road. I had saved my precious catch of trout, and my fishing gear was in the barn with the saddlebags. If my face had been seen, or my name been known, I might have fared badly. But the gathered delegates were all trusty men from the canyons around, and none rode down the bleak, wind-swept coast to Santa Cruz.

I arrived at home near daybreak, and it was not long before two or three of the most prudent of the Union League knew the strange story of my experience. The whole scheme was in embryo, the scheme just hatching out. It happened that one of the lime shippers, a man of great wealth and vigour, was a pronounced Union man. To him the frustration of the scheme was intrusted.

It was not desirable to precipitate a local conflict. We feared the results of individual vengeance, and, by a wise discretion, the Union League smuggled a few good men into the

employ of the landing crew. One or two Government detectives watched all future shipments from San Francisco to Williams Landing. There were several little buildings run up at Williams Landing, where a 'store' suddenly blossomed out. There were gradual changes in the command of the schooners bringing freight, and every vessel had a detective on board. There were no arrests of suspected members of the unlawful gathering, but that branch of the 'Knights' never flourished afterward!

It was found out later that the conspirators became alarmed at the control of the landing going gradually out of their hands, and so the plan was substantially changed. The beautiful schooner soon left the buoy outside the natural dry-dock. Even the dull frontiersmen could see that their game had been mysteriously stopped.

And, bit by bit, some heavy packages were returned to San Francisco, consigned 'to order.' All this was done under the keen eyes

of Federal officials. It was eight months after my discovery that the expedition was really captured at the wharves at San Francisco, where the fine schooner was ostensibly being loaded with 'heavy machinery' for Mexico! The breaking of a tackle exposing some contraband of war, and the pouncing down of the United States detectives, who had followed part of the goods back, caused three very able Southern schemers to spend some years in prison, after being tried for piracy. The whole coast, from Panama to Vancouver was closely watched thereafter, and the fool-hardy attempt was not repeated during the war. And, for many long years, very few of the local wiseacres knew that a boy's fishing trip led to the 'Pirate of Williams Landing' going out of *business*!

THE WHITE INDIAN

IN the year eighteen hundred and sixty-eight there were few localities in the still unsettled West more dangerous for residence than Pinal, Gila and Graham Counties, Arizona. Situated on the upper waters of the Gila River, they were continually traversed by parties of emigrants moving along the old Southern Overland Road.

The whole trail from El Paso to Fort Yuma was infested with deserters, disbanded guerrilla soldiers, Mexican horse thieves, and villains of every description, for the war had left its fearful legacy of utter demoralisation.

There was not a single military post in the great triangular plain of Southern Arizona, once inhabited by a powerful and peaceful people. The dwellers in the Casas Grandes have left an area of a thousand square miles

covered with fragments of their beautiful pottery. Their irrigating ditches, their mud-walled forts, their four-storey houses of sun-dried bricks, and all the vestiges of a forgotten life, tell of a great vanished people who were corn-planters and owners of vast herds of sheep. It seems that neat cattle and the horse came in later, with the Conquistadores.

The Gila River, a priceless boon to the traveller, winds, from its source in the New Mexican Mountains, eight hundred miles to its junction with the mighty Colorado at Fort Yuma. Its green banks broke the awful monotony of the burning, bare rocks, grey, sandy wastes, cactus plains and chapparal groves, which swept from Point Isabel, Texas, on the Gulf of Mexico, to San Diego on the far shores of California. The arable lands along the Gila, from three to twenty miles wide, then afforded a home to the peaceful Pimas, Papagoes and Maricopas—the three friendly tribes, whose pride is that they have never seen the colour of a white man's blood.

But, hanging high over the valley dwellers from the peaks of the White Mountains and the Black Hills, the baleful signal-fires of the Apaches glittered by night, giving warning of any raids from the three strong army posts at Fort M'Dowell, Camp Grant and Prescott. These, with Fort Yuma and Fort Mohave, were the central strongholds of the dispirited troops. A series of isolated mountains, breaking across the three counties named, gave an ample opportunity for the murderous Apaches to steal over from their interior fastnesses of Arizona to the Sierra Madres of Sonora. These hiding-places were impregnable. Only the Apaches knew the hidden water-holes. In the canyons of the Salt River and Gila range the red-handed hill dwellers mustered, and, watching for small trains, weak escorts, and parties of half-armed emigrants, they swooped down upon them, with fiendish atrocity. The most valuable captured horses were run over to Sonora and sold at half price, the easy-going Mexicans selling these

same Apaches cartridges and guns. As on the Upper Missouri, a guilty profit-seeking left one half of the white community victims of the wiles of the other. Cattle and sheep were driven, when captured, into the concealed villages of the Apaches, the horses stolen in Arizona and Sonora always being traded off.

The Apache marauders were essentially foot Indians, and adepts in following on after careless travellers, always swooping down when the victory was a foregone conclusion. Dodging the troops, they made their raids before and behind the soldiers, concealing themselves, when hard pressed, with wonderful skill. I have seen twenty Indians hide themselves in a circle of two hundred yards, and I was forced to give up and call them out of their wonderfully ingenious concealment.

An abandoned acequia, a trifling gully, sufficed to hide at short notice a murderous band of twenty to forty. In 1868 there was not a rail laid in Arizona, nor anything but

an adobe to be seen from Fort Yuma to Tucson. The respectable whites on the Gila ended at Florence, and a few scattered ranches on the Upper Gila were tenanted by renegades and castaways who had some mysterious freemasonry binding them to all wrong-doers.

In those days the man going through M'Dowell Canyon, the Picacho, or to Prescott, waited for some passing escort or joined other well-armed travellers. For, verily, a man took his life in his own hand. On one occasion I camped with ten men on the wild waste north of the Gila, and we counted seventeen Indian fires blazing forth the Apaches' stern defiance to the white man, and his menace to the Spaniards, whom he has harried for two hundred years! 'Hardly more than one half a man to a camp,' said 'Big Blair,' my frontier guide, laughing grimly. 'Ten men and seventeen Indian fires.' I was too much busied with certain bitter reflections on the policy of sending soldiers out in knots, to fight Apaches in droves, to appreciate Blair's wit!

A continual nefarious traffic and crossing from Arizona to Sonora for years had enriched many unscrupulous trading Mexicans. The Apaches disdained chaffering, and paid royally in captured horses, wagons, trinkets, jewels and money, for the three things they craved—rum, cartridges and weapons.

But it became apparent at last, in the unerring success of the Apaches' raids on the Upper Gila, that they were aided by keen-witted friends along the lines of the Gila. Valuable horses stolen from Sonora were distributed along the Gila, their brands artfully altered; Government arms and ammunition were found in the few Apache camps raided, for the Indians, from their fastnesses, could often watch the troops toiling on for days and elude them with the greatest ease. But several well-planned descents of the troops signally failed in the fall of '68, and a general feeling of indignation arose against the treacherous Americans who would aid the cruelest murderers of the West. For there seemed

to be a fiendish delight in the Apaches' work of devastation. Whole trains of half-guarded freight wagons had been tipped over into the canyons, the hamstrung mules following the wrecked vehicles.

The good faith of the Pimas, Papagoes and Maricopas was stainless, for twice a year they gathered and, sweeping north of the Gila in parties of two or three hundred, drove in the Apache outposts, fighting some very creditable skirmishes. The work could not be done from the stations along the Gila, for the Apaches would not dare to peaceably exchange their Sonora horses, Mexican plunder, and the spoils of the American for cartridges, weapons and rum. There was an unwritten code of death to the man who sold these things to Indians. The county officials and army officers decided that there must be a meeting place for these exchanges, or that some of the ranches of the Upper Gila were tenanted by renegades who made the Apaches' work effective. And yet, with a great deal

of quiet scouting, no traces were discovered of the Apaches' secret friends.

In a few months the plunder of ingoing and outcoming trains in the vicinity of the junction of the San Pedro and Gila became alarming. Though some trains would move south, between Desert Peak and the Santa Catalina Range, others follow the San Pedro, and yet others linger along in sight of the green oasis of the Gila, the record of relentless murder and successful surprise was an astonishing one.

It soon became a self-evident truth that the Apaches were skilfully handled and dodged across the desert from the Mexican to the American side, and were directed with a foreknowledge of the possible plunder. Only the great trains of twenty prairie schooners hauling the goods for Tucson, Arizona's largest city, from the head of steam navigation at Fort Yuma, were left unattacked. Each wagon, with four well-armed men, was a moving fortification. The army escorts, in parties of

twenty, were safe, for the breechloaders were too much then for the Apaches' old guns. Like all American Indians, the Apaches were absolutely destitute of mechanical ability, being unable to repair the slightest defect in a gun or its mechanism. There were no bands of hostile Mexicans settled upon the Upper Gila, and the discovery of some arms taken from dead Apaches, which had been neatly repaired, proved at last that the hated, shock-headed, stunted murderers had secret friends in the settlements near by.

I had pondered long over this situation of affairs, and made up my mind that the clearing house of this frontier villainy, the secret headquarters of the organised raids, was near the junction of the San Pedro and Gila. There were six ranges of mountains on the south for observation posts and hiding-places, and a fan-like arrangement of hills and gullies north of the river leading into Apachedom, where King Cochise reigned supreme.

And so, when I was sent on a quest as far

as San Carlos and Mount Trumbull, I determined to keep my eyes and ears open. I had a sergeant and ten reliable cavalry men, and I had promised the men a handsome reward for any discovery of note. Especially in the little stations along the lonely route, I bade them be on the look-out for men trying to buy their carbines or ammunition or the Government revolvers. I made up my mind that, if I could trap the illicit traders, I might find the much desired missing link. And, with three friendly Indians, I visited every ranch on the Gila from Parker's Peak to San Carlos.

We had stopped at a squalid little clump of jacales near the junction of the San Pedro, and carefully made our camp for the night. To each man, his horse and arms represented his life; and the four pack mules, loaded with rations, represented the Delmonico part of Arizona army life—bacon, coffee and hard tack.

There were two or three frowsy Mexican women lounging around, and I narrowly examined the whole 'outfit' as we chattered

for chickens and eggs. A few thatched huts, a couple of iron pots, a bit of corn land, and a scratchy selection of the smaller animals were the entire visible wealth of the colony. One or two Indian women, a sick Mexican, and a couple of Papagoes, playing cards on a horse blanket, made up the personnel.

With a sense of the menacing nearness of the Tortilla Mountains, I posted a guard of two men, to be relieved every two hours, over the horses and mules, which were hobbled and loosely tied with long picket ropes. I divided the labours with the sergeant of inspecting the camp every two hours, for the absence of men seemed to be a suspicious feature of the little settlement.

It was four o'clock in the morning, when the sentinel whom I had just changed brought his gun down to an order, and whispered, 'Lieutenant, I wish to speak to you privately.' We wandered away out of ear-shot, and my steady old soldier, Sidney, gave me the first clue of importance as to the vicinity of the evil-

mind ed league. I had no faith in the light cavalry carbine, and so had armed my eleven men with the reliable old long Springfield infantry gun, good to-day to kill a man every time at a thousand yards.

‘I was walkin’ post, lieutenant, when one of the men hanging around here slipped up and offered me some whisky. Time was when it would have been a temptation! I couldn’t see the fellow’s face, but he had no hat on, and bushy hair, and he was rigged out in Mexican style. Then he ups and offers to buy my gun and cartridges. I would have called the sergeant, but I remembered what you told me, and so I jollied him on a bit. “You’re going on up country toward Dragoon Springs?” he said, “and, of course, the lieutenant will follow the Gila back again. If you’ll fix it, when you stop over here, so that we can get five or six of the big army rifles, and all the cartridges you can steal, I’ll give you a hundred dollars a gun in green-backs, and a dollar a cartridge.”

‘I led him on a bit, and he agreed it wouldn’t do to steal the guns on the trip up. “No! The lieutenant is a fighting man. He would tie up every man in sight till the missing rifles were produced. But, on the way home, I can fix it so as to give you the money for the whole eleven.”

“Do you live at this ranch?” said I; and then he said, pointing to a little island in the Gila, “Come over there at daybreak, and I’ll talk things over with you. I’ll give you twenty bottles of whisky for twenty cartridges. We are short of the Government ammunition, and we don’t kill soldiers enough to keep us going.”’

The stout sentinel paused. ‘Now, what’s my tip, sir?’ I thought over the situation briefly. ‘I am determined to probe this matter, Sidney,’ said I. ‘Come to my tent at daybreak. I will give you twenty fresh metallic rifle cartridges. Let Maxon, your chum, follow you over there at daybreak, ready with his gun and belt. Sell this fellow the

cartridges for the twenty bottles of whisky, and, if he really offers the hundred dollars in good currency, let him have Maxon's gun! Be sure and keep the number on the gun. It may turn up in a strange place yet. Get all the points on what kind of a lair this fellow has. He speaks good English?'

'Just as clear as the regimental adjutant,' laughed Sidney.

'All right, my man! I'll give you an extra revolver, and don't either of you stir a foot further than the place where he meets you. And size him up for good!'

I turned in, thinking over the strange occurrence, and at daybreak lazily gave the faithful soldier two packs of the cartridges almost priceless then in Arizona. Freight at fifteen cents a pound did not cheapen Uncle Sam's powder and lead. The camp was struck and the horses saddled when Sidney and Maxon returned.

I heard their brief report, 'All right, sir; 'and Sidney handed me five twenty-dollar

bills. 'That's the price of the gun, sir; we buried the whisky down at the river bank!'

'Get your breakfast, men, and I'll send the sergeant with you to bring the whisky in. We will serve it out on the march in regular grog rations.'

I was careful to show no uneasiness, for I knew the loafing women were, perhaps, trained spies, and I strolled away from the camp and examined the five bills. They were bright and new, and yet on one of them were several spots of unmistakable blood.

The murder of a mine paymaster on the Apache Pass road two months before, with fourteen thousand dollars in currency, flashed upon my mind. There were no banks in Arizona then, and the quartermaster's cash and Government paymaster's funds made up most of the circulation. I remembered that that sum had been turned over by the Tucson quartermaster's agent, in fresh funds, in return for the company's draft on the Sub-Treasury at

San Francisco. 'I wonder,' I began, as I spurred my good old dragon horse 'Stonewall' away, and called for Maxon and Sidney to take the advance, 'I wonder if I have struck the nest of "white traitors!"'

Riding out in the advance I listened to Sidney's story. 'The fellow is an American, sure enough, though he wears no hat and his hair is as bushy as an Apache's. A Mexican shirt, a pair of hide trousers, soldier's shoes, and a broad buckskin band around his middle, is his entire rig.

'He's got a whole lot of whisky cached over there in the sand, and he has built a little hut. I don't know what he wants so many guns for! He had a dozen old guns lying around there, and he has an anvil, a vice, a fiddle-drill, and a few odd tools. And he's a rare shy bird, for he wouldn't come over the river with us, but sent an Injun woman down to the river to show us the ford. He had a whole lot of bills. The Injun woman looks like an Apache,

too; blame me, if she don't! He jabbered to her in fine shape.'

I started at the name 'Apache,' for in half a day that squaw could rouse any one of a dozen hostile camps in the big bend of the Gila.

'And what did he propose?' I queried.

'He wouldn't talk to Maxon, but he offered to deposit a hundred dollars a gun, cash, if I could help the women at this station steal all the guns when we come back. "I must have those guns," he said, "and sooner than lose them I'll double the money. You fix it so the command will stay a few days at the ranch on your return," he said. "Some of the men can play off sick—'lame old soldier,' and all that."'

I did not care to excite Sidney's suspicions of my ultimate object, but I carefully recorded the number of the gun, 19142, bearing the Government eagle and the mark, 'Springfield, Mass.'

I determined during the march to San

Carlos to ask the nearest responsible officer to send down one or two keen frontiersmen and a secret detachment to watch the suspicious rancho. The exorbitant prices to be paid indicated to me a desire of some nefarious parties to get hold of a dozen of the invincible, wicked long infantry guns.

Two days after leaving San Pedro I met a pretty strong detachment of private prospectors, on their way back to San Diego. They were mostly Southern men, and had served in the war, whose echoes were hardly settled. Well-mounted, well-armed, and careless in their daring, they straggled along in knots of two and three, with no attempt at any precautions. A couple of light wagons contained their commissary stores, and the hardy Texans and Missourians slept *al fresco*.

We camped not very far from each other, and I rode over in the starlight, with a couple of men, to warn the commander of the suspicious community on the San Pedro. I told the major all that was prudent (there

is always a major where there are three Southern men), and he laughed gaily.

‘We will give them a healthy wrasse,’ he cried. ‘There’s only one thing with Injuns. Never let ’em get high ground, and my men can fight on the individual plan. But I’m obliged all the same.’

I finally persuaded the major to pass by the San Pedro hovels and camp beyond in the open. ‘Your splendid stock is a temptation.’ And as my command pressed on to San Carlos, I soon forgot my rollicking Southern friends.

I had passed a dozen trains of the dejected-looking Southern emigrants who wander across the continent from Arkansas to San Bernardino in a fitful restlessness. The patient, jaded women, the passive oxen, the frowsy children, the bushy-bearded men, rifle on shoulder, I well knew the type, but I served as volunteer doctor, newsmonger, topographer, relief agent, and general ‘desert angel’ to these shiftless ones who had left one ‘pretty pore country’ to find another, and

were now wandering along to Texas, where land was a drug. The cheerful Apache reminder of a burned wagon train and scattered human bones enlivened my route, and in one place, traced with burned sticks and blood upon the shining rocks, were hideous insults to the bravery of the whites.

Sudden orders at San Carlos sent me whirling back down the Gila, travelling as the crow flies, and cutting off all the bends in the road. Half rest and double marching made it a careworn squad which rattled into Florence, and I was without news of the river for a fortnight. The spectacle of my friend, the Southern major, seated in front of the 'Robert E. Lee House,' recalled me to the intrigues of the San Pedro scoundrel. The major's right arm was scientifically swung in bloody bandages, and he hesitated not to hail me with the time-honoured invitation, 'Hello, lieutenant! Come and have a drink.' I dismounted, and was soon the recipient of many professions of his undying gratitude.

While the sergeant camped the command, I listened to the bronzed wanderer's story. 'I put it up you were blowing a little about that corner up there on the river, but, somehow, I knew you would have no real interest in giving us a fill. And so I minded your advice and passed on by there and camped, only sending a couple of men down to buy some milk, eggs and chickens. I kept a running guard over the camp and hitched the mules with both chains and halters. In the morning I found a regular trail beaten in the chapparal all around us, but we had four men on guard, and there was no chance for a stampede.

'Then, when we pulled out toward Florence, I gave every man his orders. About ten o'clock we came to a long ravine, with some gullies just calculated to hide a bunch of Injuns in each. I sent a couple of men on into the path, and we threw out a couple more flankers on the hills. My two poor men were just

clearing the pass when a cloud of Apaches rose up all around us. We made one wild dash for high ground, and then spread to fight them, for they expected to see us huddle up below.

‘It was the hottest little fight you want to see, and yet, in half an hour, we had them whipped! They scrambled away in the rocks; but we had three dead men and two severely wounded.

‘They had followed on and passed us in the night, and laid for us. There was one fellow behind some rocks on a low mound, who led them on, and he had one of your big army guns. We got him cut off, after he had killed two of our people, and I then took a hand myself, and stationed three men to keep alternately firing at him, as he tried to play snake, and wiggle out of range. Just before I thought he was laid out he bored me through the forearm with an ounce bullet, and I then sent the boys over to strip him. He laid still till

they were on the knoll and then began to fire a revolver at the astonished men. He died, fighting like a rat and cursing in good round English. He was all got up in full Apache rig and Injun colour, but when we cut the broad band of buckskin off him, his body was white as snow. He was the head devil of the outfit—a white Apache, too. The boys just riddled him with bullets!’

I was astounded, but I at once demanded to see the gun the dead outlaw had borne. There was the tell-tale number, 19,142, on the barrel. ‘That place should be cleaned out,’ I sternly said.

‘My dear boy,’ cried the wounded major, ‘the boys went up and burned the whole shebang. They did not leave a stake standing. They found any amount of plunder hidden on the island, which has been recognised as stolen in Apache raids. There was a good round sum of money, and, worse and more of it, there were

papers and bills found in his den addressed "Charles Carter, Fronteras, Mexico," all for guns, ammunition and whisky. We took the trouble to bring this chap's head along, and it's in the saloon there, in a big jar of his own whisky. One or two Arizona men here recognise him as a man they have seen dealing in splendid horses at Fronteras, Magdalena and Hermosillo. He has been the head sneak for these fellows here, no doubt, and, with the women, piped off travellers and planned the attacks.'

I led Sidney into the saloon and showed the gaping soldier the dead renegade's head. 'Is that the man who bought your gun?' He nodded gravely. 'Take it back now,' I said. 'The Apaches will need another general advance agent.'

SNOWED IN

I WAS remarkably light-hearted on the twentieth of November, eighteen hundred and sixty-nine, as I mounted my horse to leave Round Valley, Mendocino County, California. The train of my followers was a reproduction of Falstaff's army! 'Look out for these people, they're an ornery lot — that's what they are,' grumbled the assistant agent at the Round Valley Indian Reservation. The white hangers-on of the Reservation were grinning in a secret delight as my charger was led forth.

As an engineer officer and *aide-de-camp* of the commanding general of the military division of the Pacific, I had been sent up to Round Valley to lay off an extensive reservation for five or six thousand Indians huddled into beautiful Round Valley.

Thirty by fifty miles in its elliptical dimensions, it is well watered and surrounded with a first and second battlement of hills and mountains, sweeping away to the east toward the magnificent peaks of the Sierras forming the watershed of the Sacramento River.

Eel River adroitly running around it, with the encircling mountains, made either route of departure sufficiently dangerous. The trail from Ukiah, which I used in entering the valley, was a 'rocky road to Dublin,' and my theodolites, levels and engineering paraphernalia had suffered from a succession of mishaps. I had passed a gorge where the remains of a cottage piano lay, a thousand feet below, still strapped to the remains of two army mules who stubbornly essayed to go different ways and shared a common fate.

Five months among the squatters of Round Valley had persuaded me of the utter villainy of the frontier brutes encroaching upon the

vanishing red men. I could get no honest counsels from any of them.

The army post at Camp Wright was governed by a few infantry officers who delighted in guying a tenderfoot staff officer, and my 'blanket order' for supplies and assistance might as well have been 'writ in water,' like Keats's epitaph. When all of these people painted to me the horrors of the Cahto trail, leading fifty miles northwest, I instantly decided to leave the valley by that route. The air was crisp and cold, the hunter's hallo and the woodman's axe rang thin and clear, and blankets and hot toddy were at a premium.

My work was all done. I had laid off lines which doubled the lands of the hill tribes, giving them ample woodland, hunting and fishing grounds, and an area to gather the sweet acorns for their meal. The deer and bear of the forests, the swarming salmon and trout of the river, the woodland run for their cattle and mast-bearing oak forests

for their pigs, were prime necessities to the Indians.

As I gazed around at the five hundred wick-i-ups with the crowding throngs of restless-eyed, copper-hued savages, I felt an honest pride in taking leave of my aboriginal wards. The great general who fought the battle of Nashville had bidden me roll back the lines of the thieving squatters and leave to the plundered Indians room enough on their own land to live in peace in their own way. I had tried to do my duty. I felt, as I shook hands with the Indian agent and the principal chiefs, that I had done so. I had taken a dozen chiefs of the Wyelackies, Pitt Rivers, Diggers, Snakes and Modocs, around the lines, which I left doubly blazed in the forests, and showed them the fifty corner posts marking the angles of their territory.

This policy of General George H. Thomas in separating the spoiler and the spoiled was a wise one, and it kept peace for twenty years in Round Valley, until disease and rum

have obliterated the tribes with whom I spent an exciting five months. The contrary policy, later, brought on the Modoc war, and Joseph's war in the lapse of a few years. These were wars as creditable to the Indians as Thermopylæ's battle was to the Greeks! The costly tribute of the blood of General Canby and his gallant officers, the battle of the Clearwater, and the millions uselessly spent on the Modoc and Joseph campaigns, were the logical result of the brutal encroachments of the whites.

I realised that I left hardly a white friend in Round Valley as I despatched my train, with all my baggage, engineering implements and three days' rations. A dozen notable Indians, half of them armed with axes, two or three mule-drivers, and Tuttle, the head Reservation packer, were my attendants.

'Are you armed?' said the retired army captain, who was the local Indian agent. I smiled and pointed to Tuttle's revolver, as that bronze-faced youth sat gracefully upright on a wild broncho, then trying to scatter him

over an acre of ground. 'You need an escort!' sternly said the captain, as he sent a man galloping on in advance to Camp Wright.

The last good-bye was said, and I lightly vaulted upon my horse. At twenty-three I considered myself a rough rider, and my departure from the Round Valley Indian Reservation taxed all the powers of a blended Californian and West Point riding experience. We were a half-mile away from the Reservation when the thin-breasted, wall-eyed, sorrel demon, from sheer exhaustion, allowed Tuttle to rein up near me. The frontier youth had lost his hat in the race; his gay-coloured neckerchief shone saucily out over his blue riding jerkin, and he laughed heartily as he said, 'Lieutenant, that's the Hoopa mare that they have sent over for you! The meanest piece of horse-flesh that I ever mounted, and I've been a vaquero since boyhood. They always send a new officer something calculated to break his neck!'

I grimly appreciated the little brotherly joke, and determined to ride that Hoopa mare around the line of officers' quarters as I left the fort, after saying officially farewell, so as to show the ladies of Camp Wright that I appreciated the joke.

At the cross roads, half way to Camp Wright, several loaferly hangers-on at the one valley store cheered me with merry predictions. While one said, 'Lootenant, the river is up! You'll have to swim the Cahto crossing. The mail-rider was drowned there three days ago!' Another, gazing at the mackerel sky, lazily drawled, 'You'll get snow enough on the big divide! Chances are you'll not make the trip!' I gladly rode away, after Tuttle had bought his tobacco and a few knick-knacks, and I noticed that he rode close behind me until we were well out of rifle shot. We had passed and re-passed our train once or twice. I groaned as I saw the cherished property of the Corps of Engineers gyrating around in that graceful

figure known as the 'Blazing Star'; but my work was done, the sketch map and the survey notes, later approved by the President of the United States, were in my bosom, and so I rode happily along, with both eyes fixed upon the Hoopa mare's ears. I delighted in giving that fiend all the riding she needed before we reached the beautiful post of Camp Wright, a memorial to General Tom Jordan, who reluctantly left the hunter's paradise he had built to flourish as Chief of Staff to Beauregard at Bull Run.

'Ye're goin' to get some soldiers here, are ye not?' thoughtfully said Tuttle, as we neared the camp.

'I believe so!' I carelessly replied.

'Wall! I hope ye will, lootenant!' shyly said young Tuttle. 'I ain't afeard of no man, but them scrubs back there allowed as some of them might follow you, and put a ball through you for what ye've done to the Injuns. Ye're mighty onpopular here. Ef I only had my Winchester,' he said, with a

vain regret. There was no mistaking his sincerity.

I recalled, with indignation, a base attempt to bully me, by underhand suggestion, on my beginning my work. I had mapped all the pretended claims, and at one of my camps a committee of three were ushered out at the muzzle of a heavy rifle for certain insulting proposals. I knew that stages had been robbed on the trail, an army paymaster trapped and left for dead, and, when I found four infantrymen equipped with their heavy Springfields and a double allowance of ammunition, I understood the agent's foresight. It was only on my return to San Francisco, three hundred miles away, that I learned of a secret plan to murder me and destroy my survey notes. Even that desperate move would only have postponed the dispossessing of the valley squatter rogues for some years.

An extra mule, with the rations for the four men for a week, was added to my train, and, after a delay of an hour, my little

command was hidden from sight in the rolling hills to the west of the fort. Short ceremony I made of the adieux, as between the lurking murderers and the courtesy of the Hoopa mare, I left nothing behind me to increase 'the sweet sorrow of parting!' A friendly lieutenant of infantry had hanged me his belt and army six-shooter, without a word of explanation. 'You can send it back by Corporal Yeackle!' he remarked, and I understood the significant pressure of his hand. The one in danger is always left to stumble along and find out the terrors of the road for himself!

On our western pathway of fifty miles were several old abandoned cabins; there was a mail station at Eel River, with a rope ferry, practicable when the river was not raging, and one steep range of high hills, backed by lofty mountains on either side of Eel River, lay between me and Cahto, where by stage I could descend the beautiful coast valleys and reach headquarters at San Francisco from Petaluma.

The Indians trotted along silently by the train, the woods rang with the staccato remarks of my mule packers, the four soldiers dragged along with the ambitionless stride of men who serve others in a perfunctory way, and as the Hoopa mare postponed her devilry until she had regained some strength, the simple frontiersman, Tuttle, entertained me with crisp tales of border feuds, family vendettas and Indian killing, both amateur and professional. The sun sloped to the west in the magnificent forests, the night-breeze swept down from the purple hills, and far to the north, gorgeous rose and gold and crimson colour played upon the majestic snowy summits of the pathless Sierras.

Magnificent pines surrounded us, with gnarled firs, great full-bosomed oaks, splendid red-gleaming madronas, and acorn, berry and wild plum were tempting the deer and bear. Great flights of quail, bevies of grouse and chattering squirrels were aroused by our march.

It was sundown when Tuttle galloped ahead to a deserted cabin hard by a gurgling spring. The whole tired cavalcade drew up around the welcome shelter. There were several pretty oak openings near us, and Tuttle's foot was hardly on the ground before 'Captain Jim,' the Wyelackie chief, pointed to a superb buck, eyeing us not three hundred yards away. Seizing the corporal's rifle, Tuttle sped away to get a broadside view. The ringing crack of his rifle called the Indians, and ten minutes later the buck was hanging from the poles of the thatched porch!

It was an ideal camp that night! The ruddy fire, the good cheer, fresh venison, army pork and tinned potatoes, coffee *ad libitum*, and pipe *à discrétion* put me in a good humour. The moon drifted over the battlements of the Sierras, and the sighing voices of the night recalled old days to me.

I had made Tuttle my second in command. I ordered the corporal to stack the arms in

a little shed 'lean-to,' where my blankets were laid down, and the poor soldiers, before a fire blazing in the old fireplace, squatted on the floor, played that army game of poker which never ends. I have seen soldiers without Bibles, but I never saw one without 'a deck of cards.' Professional etiquette prevented me associating with the fat German, Corporal Yeackle, the long-legged, saucer-eyed, Irish giant, 'Mulholland,' the mean-faced, ferret-eyed, renegade-looking American, 'Brown,' and soldier No. 4, Riley, a hardened Irish soldier of the type 'manufactured to order' for the regular army.

Tuttle was busied with his muleteers and the animals, and so I passed an informal evening with the Indians, who were squatted around three fires in front of the cabin, devouring the buck in short order. 'Captain Jim,' 'Bismarck,' 'Three Star,' 'Old Tom,' 'Horace Greeley,' 'Sweetbread,' 'Running Rat' and 'Big Pappoose' were the fanciful names of several of the gang representing

three tribes, and of the other sullen, low-browed red men, two were destined to achieve a military fame—and—one to die on the gallows for killing an officer. It suddenly occurred to me that I would have Tuttle watch these uncouth red men, for I fancied I saw a black bottle! They had no arms, but I found that kindly Indian agent had given them five dollars each to insure their fidelity to my comfort as far as Cahto.

With a word of caution to Tuttle, and a hint to the corporal about the arms, I 'laid my brows upon the drifted leaves and dreamed.' I was almost case-hardened, with six years of athletics and the last five months in these wild hills, as any of the Indians, but before morning I rolled over and over to avoid a penetrating cold which froze my very marrow. The first streakings of dawn found us all astir, and, to my dismay, there was six inches of snow on the ground, and the long, soft, feathery flakes were dropping incessantly and as thick as flocks of cotton wool.

The breakfast was hastened in a gloomy silence. The Indians divided the remains of the deer's carcass, and when all the animals were brought up and packed I saw Tuttle gazing at me with an air of concern. 'What is it, lieutenant?' he said. 'Forward? There will be heavy snow on the divide. There are men who would turn back at once to Camp, Wright. You might leave all this stuff and push on with me and one mule. We could surely force our way through to Cahto.'

'Tuttle,' I said gravely, 'I must reach San Francisco. I must finish this map, and get the President's proclamation out as soon as possible.'

'Well, if ye've drawn yer bead, here goes!'

I feared to face his honest, inquiring eyes. I knew that he was not sullen, and a braver man never drew breath. We were the last to leave the cabin, and the unwilling animals, the slouchy soldiers, the apathetic Indians, all staggered up trail, to where the open rocky knolls, the dim ravines and precipitous

ascents to the top of the Eel River divide made our journey a dismal one.

The snow blew in our faces and soon blinded us. I managed to keep a pipe lighted, the trail became slippery, and the snow deeper and deeper. We passed three great black bears rolling over each other in the snow, and no one had curiosity enough for a shot. The forest was gloomy, the winds cut us sharply, and our spirits fell with the thermometer. Four hours of floundering along, with several of the animals down at one time, at last exhausted the energies of the whole command. It was not four o'clock when we entered a canyon by a creek leading to the last incline of the Eel River divide. A great oak forest showed the girdled trees of the tan-bark scalper, and a cabin invited us to its welcome shelter. It was strongly built and seemed to be a sort of *Hospice de Saint Bernard* station, though untenanted. There was a little room with a rude bunk, and some scattered straw and

leaves. When the property was all under cover, the animals fed with grain and sheltered, and fire and food had relieved us, I watched Tuttle, silent and dispirited, seated before the fire drying his neckerchief.

I began to realise my mistake, and I ruefully watched the falling snow, now eighteen inches deep. The Indians were huddled on one side of the open cabin, my soldiers on the other, and the arms were stowed away in my little den. Only Tuttle and I had revolvers. The young frontiersman understood the silent question of my eyes.

‘It’s a mighty hard game cut out for us here. I tell you what, lieutenant, I’ve got to ride back to the reservation to-night. I can make it by ten o’clock. Your animals are plumb beat out. The grain will be gone to-morrow. The food next day. I’ll take a letter to the agent. He can send a dozen men up, each with two animals. You’ve got to stop here. I’ll bring you grub and grain. Then we will pick out the best mules, and

take a half-dozen good men. We can force you over to Eel River ; once across, you can get to Cahto, and your stuff must stay here till spring—and then the quartermaster send it down. This trail will be closed in a week for the whole winter.'

A half-hour's argument could not change his resolution. 'I'm bound to see you through!' he cried, 'and I'll be back here the second day and push you on.' In ten minutes my two official appeals were pencilled off, and I grasped the brave fellows hand with gratitude, as he faced the blinding snowstorm, and sped away alone down the trail. He had all my cigars, and a trusty leather jacket, the companion of many a hunting foray.

Feeling the need of discipline, I called the four soldiers aside, and, instructing the corporal in their presence, I gave them the most rigid orders about the animals, and the treatment of the Indians, as well as the care of our slender stock of food. My evening toilet

was made when my boots were drawn off, and I slept the sleep of exhaustion and disgust. I was baffled at every turn, and caught on the hither side of Eel River, in perhaps the closing storm of the year!

It seemed to me that I could hear in my uneasy dreams the clatter of tin cups, the rattle of money, and the sound of dispute, but I awoke late to find the snow nearly three feet thick, and the storm still continuing, though the wind had gone down. I breakfasted, through the attentions of Corporal Yeackle, and set myself about inspecting the animals, seeing them fed with the last of the grain, and sheltered as far as we could devise means. The store of provisions was carefully examined. Two days at most would be the spinning out of the slender store. I laid out every possible occupation for my time, and at last, as the long afternoon was closing, I was reduced to poring over a battered copy of Shakespeare, the 'stand-by' of years of travel. I was obliged

to decline Captain Jim's application for the loan of one of the soldier's guns. 'Plenty deer stand around in snow, now,' he said. 'Got him foot wet.' I diplomatically answered 'To-morrow!' I knew that Tuttle would be back with me, or at least near, for a singular lack of cordiality seemed to have grown up between my body-guard and the Indians!

I carefully inspected my camp, verified the safety of the rations and the presence in my room of all the weapons, and lay down to sleep that night after the longest day of my life. White and grey, cold and cheerless, the external scene was made more gloomy by night's black shadows.

The two groups of my followers were playing cards by the firelight when I gave the corporal his last orders. We had heaped up all the dry wood near for fuel, and I feared an accidental fire, which might cost all our lives. One of the soldiers was stationed on guard, but unarmed, with

orders to arouse a mate every two hours for relief.

In the midnight hours I was aware that the two groups were still playing cards, an amusement at which the Indians are the equal of any Mississippi River gambler. I did not care to forbid the apparently harmless game, as the men were without comfort and had a hard siege before them. Suddenly the heavy bang of a Springfield rifle brought me to my feet, with my revolver in hand.

As I sprang out of the little side room I could see the corporal and the two Irishmen struggling with Private Brown, who still clung to a rifle from whose muzzle the smoke was pouring. There was not an Indian in the room! The three muleteers had crawled out of their corner.

‘What is the meaning of all this?’ I cried, as, clapping my revolver to Brown’s head, I bade him give up the gun. ‘It was all an accident,’ the man grumbled, and looking

him squarely in the face I saw that he was undeniably drunk. Then I ordered the corporal and the other two soldiers to tie up the man, which they did most unwillingly. I could see that there was something hidden from me, but in ten minutes all was quieted. Taking the best of the muleteers, I gave him the rifle, and, searching the four soldiers for cartridges, gave the civilian orders to shoot anyone trying to touch the arms or ammunition. And then I sent the other two mule-drivers out to find and placate the frightened Indians. They trudged about in the storm for ten minutes, and I saw disaster in their eyes as they returned covered with snow. 'The Indians have cut the lariats of all the animals and cleared out upon them, riding bareback.' I needed no further blow to dampen my spirits. The worst had befallen

Alternating with the three mule-drivers, I guarded the arms and rations until day-

light, keeping the four soldiers under close arrest. The truth leaked out before my morning coffee had restored my good humour. An all-round game of poker, in which the Indians produced the secreted liquor bought at the cross-roads, led to a quarrel of sudden violence. Brown, emboldened by drink, detected in cheating, snatched up the stakes, and, springing to a corner, fired the gun of the guard point blank at the Indians in his drunken recklessness. And the poor fellows had cleared out in terror.

None of the soldiers would tell on their mates, and I transferred my affections to the mule-drivers, now by no means glad of the unfaithful escort.

The long day crawled away, and no Tuttle! No sound of relief, no help. One bright ray of hope illumined my winter skies. It had stopped snowing. We four men (in good repute) guarded the sullen soldiers, and the evening after the flight of the Indians passed most gloomily. We all

knew they would take their own side trails back to the Reservation, where all the animals belonged, save the Hoopa mare, which they had scorned to steal. She was a bright star of the War Department. Nothing was left of 'Mr Lo,' save the scattered bones of the deer, and a few fragments of the carcass lying around their fires in front of the open door of the cabin.

I was sleeping at three o'clock, and dreaming of Tuttle's relief train, when a hand on my arm wakened me. It was the muleteer on guard—'Big Andy.'

'See here, lieutenant,' he whispered. 'There's a thundering big grizzly hanging around the door. He has found the remains of the deer.' In grim silence we loaded the four heavy Springfield rifles, and the corporal grasped a burning brand from the fire. I gave him my revolver, and with orders for only two to fire at a time, we crawled to the door. The three mule-drivers

and myself were the gunners, and the men stood ready to hand us cartridges.

When the burning brand was whirled the great marauder ran away twenty yards and stopped, growling and digging up the snow. 'Now,' I cried, 'give it to him!' Two one-ounce balls tore through him, and as he turned, with a roar, he met a second discharge.

In the excitement we fired alternately, till a dozen balls had laid him out. But no one ventured near him till daylight brought us Tuttle and a dozen selected men. The sun was shining brightly when he rode up. I selected four men and eight horses. Before noon Tuttle and I had crossed the Eel River divide, and the soldiers were trudging homeward. To our inexpressible delight, after a descent of fifteen miles, the scow-boat ferry was found to be in running order. Even my precious instruments were landed on the other side of the Eel River without damage, and leaving two men to

come on with them, after a night spent in the ferry hut, the young frontiersman selected for me the best horse and mounted the next best himself. Well provided with supplies in our saddle pouches, we rode along through the darkling forest, as one who fears the avenger of blood! The great storm had whirled around, and the two days of sunshine gave us the time needed to reach the hamlet of Cahto. All unmindful of past fatigue, I crawled into the body of a Concord coach, about to start in half an hour. My precious trust was safe. I could rest further on. 'The soldiers and the Indians?' said Tuttle. '*Let them settle it among themselves!*' I gaily cried, as I left the loyal fellow there on guard, with my gold watch in his hand as a parting gift. I received from Tuttle the bearskin, tanned nicely, six months later, as a memorial of being 'Snowed In.'

WITH THE CARIBS OFF RUATAN ISLAND

THERE are moments in life when the burden of existence becomes unbearable. I appreciated this fact on the fifth of June, eighteen hundred and ninety, when I rode into Truxillo, Spanish Honduras, on the seventeenth day of lonely travel returning from a bootless quest for gold and the gloomy gorges of the Mangalile River.

I had looked forward, with a secret triumph, to hastening along the sea beach after emerging from the last horrible canyon, and buying my steamer ticket for New Orleans, Mobile or Baltimore. I knew that I had thrown away six months, several thousands of dollars and my health in a fruitless chase for fool's gold. Of the valuable outfit nothing remained but

a superb double gun, a Lone Star frontier revolver, a few cartridges, and a very few available dollars. Besides the thieves and jaguars—more deadly than the *fer de lance* or the machêtes of the ‘Ladrones’—there was a grim enemy now stalking abroad upon the steaming plains of Yoro, the arid logwood wastes of Olancho, and the beautiful, impenetrable jungles of the Colon morasses of the Aguan. It was the dreaded Yellow Jack!

I was busied with watching two scoundrels plotting my death, but I could not ignore the fact, on awaking after a night spent in a hut at Jocon, that five out of nine women huddled around the little hacienda had died in the night of yellow fever.

There was but one precaution for me—to boil all the water I drank on the march, and to follow up taking the quinine, of which I had used five ounces in four months.

No happier man ever rode across the Plaza d’Armas of Truxillo than the writer, as he swung himself down from the little

mule which had brought him over seven ranges of mountains, three hundred miles out of the wilderness. The clang of the cracked bells in the old Catholic church, the passing of several squads of brown-skinned men and black-draped women, following rude biers, told me that Yellow Jack had resumed his saffron crown of death! Mine host, Juan Crespo, gazed blankly at a six-footer who weighed one hundred and thirty pounds instead of his normal two hundred and nine. My hair waved freely above the crownless felt hat, a pair of old boot-tops protected my legs, and a long Russian towel, hung diagonally, like an army blanket, was swung round my neck as an aid in crushing the hundred-winged and thousand-legged insects. The revolver belt was perhaps my identification, for no Honduran was burned a redder brown than the New Yorker who had faced one hundred and ten in the sun for months.

When Crespo, the Boniface, at last re-

cognised his whilom guest, the Americanised Cuban laughed. 'You know what the Mangalile trail is now, *mi amigo*.' I tossed my belt and six-shooter in a corner, delivered over my mule to his keeper, and hastened away across the square to the office of the New Orleans steamers. There were three fruit steamers swinging idly at buoys on the crystal blue flood of Truxillo Bay, where far below the sponges, coral and the flower garden of the sea could be described fifty fathoms deep.

I had a treasured store of a hundred or more Central American silver dollars, and when I dashed into the Oteri Steamship Office, the lazy clerk puffed his cigarito, pushed back my bag of dollars, and silently pointed to an official advertisement. My heart froze within me as I read the ominous lines.—

No passenger tickets to the United States of America sold until November 1, 1890.

Yellow fever quarantine exists at all American ports.
S. OTERI & CO., June 1, 1890.

When I demanded of the clerk what steps I should take to get out of the country, he grinned. '*Pues, señor, quien sabe!* You might get over to Belize, but they are dying like sheep over there, and you would be tied up there till November first. Better stay here in Truxillo.' I grasped my sack of dollars, and after visiting the offices of the Mobile and Baltimore steamers, as well as the opposition 'Men-chaca' line, I gave up my quest in despair. I had offered a certified draft for five hundred dollars, a two hundred dollar gold watch, and my sixty pound sterling London gun for a forty dollar passage to Mobile. In desperation, I even offered to be mustered with the ship's crew, so as to leave the flaming fiery fever furnace. But all in vain! The keen-eyed Honduran officials were out for 'backsheesh,' and the placing of one unauthorised person on the ship's papers would have forfeited both steamer and cargo. The American Boards of Health

personally mustered the ship's people, and even the dead were carefully accounted for. This was a delightful phase of Honduran life, and late that night I revolved every plan of escape with Juan Crespo.

I knew that I never would live to make the four weeks' overland trip to Amapala, on the Pacific, but from Mangalile, in the Campamento Mountains, I could have easily escaped to the West, had I known of the blockade. It was impossible to reach either Colon or Nicaragua, and the cheerful intelligence that the British Governor of Belize, his bride, secretary and leading officer, were all dead within a week, summarily disposed of the Belize plan.

I wandered around the decayed old town for several days in a stupor. I was just five days too late to leave the land of plantains and picarones. My wife was contemplating a return from Europe, and important affairs claimed me in New York City. The mysterious hidden gold mine

bubble had burst, and with a shudder I recalled the horror-haunted tropical forest which I had lived in for six weeks. One especially devilish race of birds seemed to enjoy lingering in the foliage till aroused by the mule's feet, and then, with an unearthly scream, to glide out, brushing one's face with unclean wings.

I had heard the Apache yell and the war-cry of the Sioux, but nothing ever shook my nerve as much as this devil bird! The morning and evening clatter of the jungle had worn my patience to a thread, and in the graceful forest vistas, where the Espiritu Santo flower bloomed, where every wealth of orchid, and the gorgeous-coloured flowers of kings tempted the eye, there was only disease, miasma, lurking death from venomous reptiles, the hungry tigers, and the low-browed assassin.

Only the telegraph was open for communication, for the steamers were to be withdrawn, and the poor consolation of letters was denied

me. It roused every drop of my blood to throbbing energy when I saw two men of note die on the side walk, having been thrust out by the terrified inmates of a cheap posada.

Finding one poor, dejected American in the five thousand dwellers under Congrehoy Peak, I furtively conferred with him. He was a forlorn hope, watching a quarter of a million dollars' worth of steamboats and dredges thrown away in a vague, feeble attempt to open the mighty Aguan's navigation for two hundred miles.

'There is but one chance, colonel,' said the sad-eyed waif of fortune. 'The American Consul comes over from Ruatan Island with his sloop now and then. There is Utila, Bonaca and Ruatan, the Bay Islands. They are sea-swept and healthy, and you may get to Cuba or Jamaica from Ruatan. Keep your own counsel! If Consul Burchard comes, just plant yourself aboard and it may save your life.' It was good advice, and I haunted the old barbican of the Spanish fort.

I gazed out on the glassy blue, beyond Hog Island, for the one white sail. The splendid old council hall of the Conquistadores, Carib town, the prisons, fort and cuartels, I duly examined, and gave no sign of my attempted evasion.

Whether death scorned me, or I was quinine poisoned, I cannot say, but I was awakened one morning by my American friend, to say that the Ruatan sloop was in. Half an hour later I saw my trunk thrown on the deck of the ten-ton sloop, and I sprang aboard the *Dart* as boldly as a boarding pirate. A few letters of hitherto useless recommendation 'squared me' with the somewhat disgruntled consul, and, two days later, I landed at Coxen's Hole Harbour in the fairy Ruatan Island. Ten beef cattle in the hold, a dozen half-breed women and children, and the consul's family relegated me to sleeping on deck, firmly lashed to the rigging, as we were becalmed a whole day on a sea which roasted us like a burning glass.

Jerked beef roasted to a crisp, baked plantains and mud coffee were the creature comforts of the *Dart*, but I could not criticise my fare as the pacified consul scorned any remuneration for the fifty-mile trip.

My heart leaped up at seeing the beautiful, neat villages of the three islands settled by Lord St Vincent's Scotch colonists a hundred years ago. Daring boatmen, splendid woodsmen, these half-breed Covenanters, speaking Spanish with a Scotch burr, cling to the kirk and schoolhouse, and have the only prosperous Christian homes that I have ever seen in the American tropics. Thrift and success seem to follow these Castilian 'Sawneys'; their fruit plantations are models; their white cottages, with cool, green blinds, are palatial compared with the Honduran adobes.

And the men and women seem to be able to keep clothes upon their sturdy forms, an impossible luxury for the slouchy Dons and Donnas.

When the *Dart* glided into the beautiful old land-locked pirate harbour of Coxen's

Hole, I scoured the pretty village in search of news of a passing schooner. There were passing trading brigs, too, knocking around the Windward Islands. I determined to get out of Honduran waters by hook or crook, though the three Bay Islands are really under a secret British protectorate from Belize.

It was at the cuartel of the Honduran general in nominal command that I learned an American fruit schooner was loading at French Harbour, twelve or fifteen miles away. Beautiful Ruatan, forty miles long, and ten miles broad, is a fairy island of Monte Cristo. Far up on its purple peaks the Martello towers of the old buccaneers still overlook the sapphire ocean paradise.

The fear that the New York bound schooner might leave me caused me to hunt instantly for the first two Carib boatmen who (for a decent bribe) would take me and my trunk at once, along the south shore of Ruatan to French Harbour. A few cigars, and a couple of pounds of smoking tobacco,

were my sole purchases, and the interpreter who hired my two Caribs made all clear to them. They had only a bunch of green plantains, a jar of water, and some papelitos as supplies.

An old cat-boat about twenty feet long was my means of conveyance, and the glaring sun and tropical rain had opened the decks and rotted half the cordage. But, headlong in my hurry, I never realised that I trusted myself unarmed with two men only speaking the Carib jargon, and who eyed my golden watch and bag of dollars with considerable curiosity. I had sold both my pistol and gun, and I was both worn and weak.

We glided along under a freshening breeze, running out of the almost land-locked harbour where Lafitte often hid his vessels, to feel the full sweep of a rising gale. The beautiful Caribbean is famous for its sudden circular storms, which have overturned many a stout gunboat, and even staunch steamers. But, lying spread out in the cockpit, I watched

the alert Caribs nursing their corn-shuck cigarettes, as we rounded a point and tore along, racing madly away to French Harbour. The beautiful plantations glided by, with their mango groves growing down into the water, and forming pretty still lagoons along the sculptured shore.

Another hour would have made us all safe, but the sudden gale increased in its fury, and I felt my heart sink as I saw the helmsman toss over a double sheet, which was soon reefed on the boom of the main-sail. The skies darkened, the storm king showered down his wrath upon us, and when not busied with baling, I was tightly holding on to the combings to prevent my weakened form from being tossed bodily out of the boat.

The old cat-boat sullenly plunged into the heavy head seas, and, to my dismay, I saw that the seams were opening. Two calabashes were soon at work in baling, while the tempest grew awful in its volume. I

was drenched to the skin and faint with hunger. My utmost faith in Carib fearlessness was tried as we rounded the last point from whence we could see French Harbour, five miles away. Alas! there was no schooner visible, and I failed to understand the jargon of my two boatmen.

I had determined to show no fear 'on general principles,' but I was relieved when the anxious crew dropped the mainsail sprit, making the sail only half its size, and the one man-of-all-work essayed later to double-reef it.

The rickety old boat was plunging madly along, when suddenly both the double sheets pulled out of the fastenings and the sail flew wildly out, all control of the sail being lost. The boat was half full of water as the utility man cut the rotten ropes holding up the mainsail, and down it came with a run. One more wave shipped, and we would all be food for the trailing sharks as we wallowed in the trough of the sea.

But my admiral Carib threw the tiller hard up, and giving me my orders, sprang to aid his fellow to clear away the wreck. I clung to the stern combings, blinded with the spray, and gazed ruefully around. The cat-like activity of the two Caribs had astonished me, and I gazed in wonder as the helmsman steered the boat directly for the shore, eight hundred yards away. There were frightful rollers and breakers lashing the shores now, and my voice in protest rose above the howling of the storm.

But the two Caribs only pointed to the half water-logged boat, already well down at the head, and, while one clung to the repaired mainsail sheets, the other's two bronzed arms held the tiller with an iron grip.

I closed my eyes as we rose on the crest of a gigantic wave, and trembled a moment on its curling foam, then we shot into the unvexed smoothness of a mango grove lagoon! The helmsman had taken the boat in through an opening not forty feet wide,

and my heart's blood receded with the sudden shock of the neck-or-nothing dash!

It was approaching sundown, and I ruefully gazed upon the green bunch of plantains and the jar of water. My zinc-covered trunk had partly resisted the floods. I was in a quandary, for the storm outside of the natural breakwater of trees was even fiercer in its intensity.

No means of reaching the shore seemed possible. I was willing to foot the four miles to French Harbour, but one of the Carib navigators dissuaded me from trying to swim ashore. He threw over a piece of cassava bread, and the serrated back of a huge alligator rose up circling around it, while later a yellow-bellied, basking shark made a futile dash at it!

My attempts at conversation were all absolute failures, and I gnashed my teeth at the idea of the only New York bound vessel probably for five months sailing away and leaving me an indignant Enoch

Arden, upon Ruatan! It was impossible to get the twenty-foot cat-boat near to the shore. The mango groves were dense and impossible of passage. Just as the darkness closed down, a lantern's twinkle gleamed out on the road along the shore. I hailed in English and Spanish, and to my inexpressible joy was answered by a boy speaking very good English.

In ten minutes I had explained our predicament, and, with the promise of a handsome reward, induced him to go to the nearest house and bring out a Carib dug-out through a little channel cut for the parties of fishermen operating in the lagoon.

I never knew the magic power of money before! A frantic joy reigned in my bosom when I reached the strand, and before a wagon was procured the Carib admiral had paddled my trunk ashore, a marvel of balancing, in the ten-foot canoe. The New York schooner was still at French Harbour, and, as I rolled along the road, I realised

the kindly efforts of my Caribs to tell me that she had been warped into the beautiful circular pool where the bloodthirsty Lolonois once hid away his freebooters.

The wild storm which had so nearly wrecked 'Cæsar and all his fortunes,' had made it impossible for the beautiful yacht-built fruit schooner, *Margaretta L. Smith*, of Kennebunk, Maine, to work out and gain an offing. Her cargo of 200,000 cocoa-nuts, 10,000 pine-apples, and 8000 bunches of bananas was all on board.

I had given my two daring Caribs five dollars extra, and they contentedly had been paddled out to the disabled cat-boat after grateful adieux. Said my young guide, 'With that bunch of plantains and jar of water, they will pass a happy week in the mango grove. They have a fish-line, and, with a fire built in an earthen pot, they will broil their fish.' And when I told him what I had paid them, he declared they had earned a good three months' wages!

It was midnight before I stood upon the deck of the dainty Yankee sea skimmer, and I had thrown all care to the winds as I helped the youth get my trunk out of the boat at French Harbour. A deck-hand gruffly informed me that the captain and mate were both asleep, and 'not to be disturbed.'

I took the hint and contemplated the stars for some hours that night as I lay stretched out upon an old sail, and wondering over the conspiracy of yellow fever, quarantine and Father Neptune's rage, which seemed destined to keep me a houseless wanderer in the deadly domains of Honduras.

'But I am all right now!' I cheerfully cried, as I sprang up when the crew turned out to wash decks at daybreak.

The burly captain eyed me with some astonishment, as he rudely demanded, 'What right had you to put your trunk aboard this vessel? She carries no passengers. No, sir; not for all your bag of dollars!' he

began. 'We may be quarantined at New York and lose this whole cargo simply on your account! You come from the mainland of Honduras, and your presence on our schooner would ruin the whole lot of us.' No argument would move him.

And although he gave me a good breakfast, the blunt sailor would not yield. 'I am sorry for you,' he said at length, doubtfully. 'See here! There is the cottage of Mr Armstrong, the man who owns both vessel and cargo. Go up and make your play on him. I hate to leave a Christian gentleman to die of Yellow Jack! Armstrong's a pretty good sort, too.'

In an hour I had gone over the whole subject with the middle-aged Scotch planter. 'The fact is, they won't let you land at New York,' he said. 'Even if I were to take you up there you are in for it! I am sorry.' And even the pleadings of the planter's gentle-faced wife were of no avail.

'I will jump off the schooner on the first

tug outside of New York Harbour!’ I cried, in desperation.

‘They would only land you at the Barge Office, and you would be sent back to the mainland of Honduras. You can stay with me as long as you wish—as my guest here; it won’t cost you a cent,’ he cried; ‘but I dare not risk the schooner and cargo!’

I then lost my temper a bit, and, after dilating upon the general horrors of the all-round death trap, I flatly planked down before the frightened shipowner a personal letter from General William Tecumseh Sherman to the President of Honduras. ‘If I ever get back to civilisation, I shall tell General Sherman what a welcome I received down here.’ The planter’s eyes were very widely open as he gingerly fingered the kindly letter.

‘Did General Sherman write that himself?’ he timidly demanded.

‘Every line of it!’ I said. ‘By the way, I have another letter from the general here, and I’ll give you that one.’

Springing to his feet, the planter cried loudly, 'A friend of General Sherman can have anything I've got! You just step into the store and pay thirty pesos in silver, and you shall have the best the schooner will afford. She sails the moment we can get her out of the harbour, for bananas, pines and cocoa-nuts are perishable things.' I thanked God for the enthusiast's singular change of heart.

I flew to the trading store of the planter, and pouched my paid passage ticket to New York City with great glee. The mere scratch of the dear old hero's pen had opened a gate for me which no money or urging would unloose! The sun was dancing gaily on the smooth waters as our crew kedged and warped the schooner out over the bar at French Harbour. It was a fairyland that I left, and a fairy-sea that bore me on as I watched the warm-hearted Armstrong waving the Sherman letter in triumph on the little pier. The great white sails, a full racing set, went up,

one by one, and then the graceful runaway danced along over the curling waves. 'All's well that ends well,' I mused, as I stuffed my pipe and gazed back upon the vanishing domains of Don Luis Bogan.

FIGHTING THE TIGER

THE expression 'Fighting the Tiger' is one capable of considerable latitude of interpretation. In New York City it may be construed as a prayerful contest of a political nature against the seductive Tammany Tiger. In general American sporting parlance, it often refers to a contest for the smiles of fortune over green cloth against the illusory chances of beating a well-organised banking game.

In India it now refers to a judiciously conducted 'society function,' where, with the aid of elephants, scores of beaters, and the support of many cross-fire rifles of heaviest calibre, the aroused *felis tigris*, making a desperate charge out of his jungle, is dispatched *secundum artem*, even under the approving eyes of beauty. Fire, bells, blowing of horns and a horrid din cause the panic-

stricken animal to steal out at last against pitiable odds. Nothing is to be said against the superb individual prowess of the officers of the old East India Army, but modern art has changed the conditions of the contest in Hindostan.

It is far different with the Chinese, Korean and Siberian haunts of the great feline. In China and Corea the tiger does pretty much as he pleases, traps and poison being the most effectual methods of conquering him.

There awaits the sportsmen of the world the most magnificent opening of 'happy hunting grounds' for the individual 'fighter' when the Trans-Siberian Railway is finished.

The tiger roves over the whole Asian world, never passing far west of a line drawn from the Indus to the Caspian Sea.

The regions of Amoor, Trans-Baikal, Manchuria, Primorsk and Kirin in Pacific Siberia, and Mongolia and Gobi in Northern China, are infested by the most ferocious tigers known to man.

In the Russian regions, now under a slow political development, the hardy English sportsmen will for many years be practically excluded, by the aversion to granting passports for Englishmen to unnecessarily travel in the Czar's wildest domains. Russia and England are fighting a silent duel for the political control of the home of the tiger—all of Asia—with the chances in favour of the Czar dominating China and controlling Asia.

In no country of the world has Siberia a parallel. Its gold, platinum and gems, its superb forests, its mines of coal and the useful metals, its fisheries and abundance of game, its agricultural and pomological resources—all these are wonderful; but the greatest curiosity of its marvellous natural wealth is the sweep of the entombed tropical mammoths, whose cadavers are even yet preserved by nature's cold storage process, entombed in the 'thick-ribbed ice' of the Lena, the Yenesei and the Obi. The fossil ivory there to be quarried will soon be the world's only supply, and the

ancient tropical fauna, flora and fossils may give us new, unread pages in the history of the human race.

The tiger alone of all the olden fauna has clung to this mystic region, seldom crossing the silent Amoor, but infesting the gloomy forests of the southern provinces of Pacific Siberia.

The vast forests of cedar, oak, ash, beech, elm and walnut are traversed but rarely by little post-roads or tracks leading down from the Amoor to Vladivostock and the Chinese frontier.

At every twenty miles, a block house of logs is a post station, where plenty of rye bread, tea, and the hunter's harvest, furnish food to official travellers. Small detachments of soldiers garrison these places and protect the post-horses, as well as prevent wandering convicts from committing depredations.

The woods, apart from the struggling Russian settlements along the coast and the great river, are given up to the hardy Man-

churians, the lineal descendants of Genghis Khan's warriors. In this wild land, where pillars builded to Timur and Genghis still crown the lonely heights, the fearless Manchurian hunter reigns supreme. Elk, deer, bear, wolves, foxes, and every variety of game bird are his means of subsistence, the fur animals enabling him to buy his powder, lead, guns or cartridges. Taciturn, grim, great of stature and keen of every human and animal instinct, the Manchurian hunter is a brave idolater and free of all vexatious rules. Braving cold, fatigue and privation, he traverses the pathless forest, guided by the stars, and ranges from Lake Baikal to the mouth of the Amoor, from the Yellow Sea to Possiette Bay, at the northern line of Corea.

Master of his own knowledge of edible roots and bulbs, a great flesh eater, his mechanical arts go no farther than making rude knives, bows and lances, and the rough gear for his stray Tartar pony.

To these bold woodsmen is left the task of

keeping the post-roads clear of tigers, the troika team attached to the khibitka wagons being plentifully hung with bells to startle the lurking tigers.

Neither Chinese, Corean, nor Japanese have the bold and fearless character of these Manchurians, who undoubtedly are the progenitors of our present North American Indians—such as the Blackfeet, Cheyennes, and old Comanches. Vengeance, and a sleepless rancour for injury done, stimulate them to a mad fury. One of them, some years ago, for an outrage by a petty Russian officer, stole into a block-house, slipped away with the sleeping men's stacked arms, and taking up a post to suit him, shot down thirteen out of fourteen of the startled Russians, only the last one living to tell the tale.

In these gloomy Manchurian forests lurks a tiger whose size and habits are different from the Indian feline. Whereas the average Indian tiger is good sized when a ten footer, the Siberian tiger often measures fifteen to

seventeen feet from snout to tip of tail. Its hide is fully double the thickness of the Hindostan tiger's skin, and it bears a thick fur as an undergrowth due to its cold habitat, the pelt being a hide with a fur growth, and the beautiful tiger hair coat on the surface. The superb skins brought from Corea and China are often valueless, however, by reason of strychnine poisoning, which causes the hair to all fall out very soon.

This gigantic animal in Manchuria adopts habits at variance with his cousin of the Hindostan jungle. The Indian tiger, covered by the tropical vegetation, in an over-populated land, swarming with animals and human beings, steals upon his easy prey, becoming satiated with human flesh, by springing out from ambush on the pious Hindoos lurking about the water pools for coolness, for their religious ablutions, or in search of water to fill their jars. The Siberian monster takes his post in convenient trees, usually those of inclined trunks or favourable growth, and

thence hurls himself headlong upon his prey, usually the three horses of the troika or the pony of the traveller. Then, if missing his first spring, he boldly follows, leaping along in mad pursuit.

A singular penchant for horse flesh has produced some of the strangest episodes of Siberian tiger hunting. Some ten years ago a progressive Russian gentleman imported a hundred and fifty valuable horses from Odessa, *viâ* the Suez Canal, at an enormous expense. Landed at Vladivostock, they were transferred to his horse farm not five miles from the Golden Gate of the East.

There, in the very suburbs of a garrison of ten thousand, guarded by hardy and well-armed attendants, it was found necessary to build a fifteen foot palisade around the beleaguered equines. The vast number of giant tigers, attracted by this unfortunate commercial experiment, created a serious loss of human life. The boldest Siberians became dismayed, and a full company of regular Russian

troops, under their officers, and armed with heavy Berdan military rifles and double revolvers, were sent to fight the invaders. The scent of the imprisoned animals maddened the tigers, and the roads were practically blockaded. For several months the unequal contest went on. Dozens of tigers were killed by volley firing, until the nervous strain became unbearable, and the troops flatly refused to keep their post!

A handsome carriage span from the survivors was presented to the governor, and the last six or seven of the beautiful Ukraine breeding animals were, one by one, killed and eaten by the beasts at a little summer resort not a mile from the governing admiral's palace. One of the last of the carcasses served as a bait to a trap made by digging a deep pit. Over this, on a very weak staging, the carcass was left, and the impulsive spring of the one unlucky tiger of that ever-victorious army landed him in a fifteen-foot hole, with sides so inclined that he could not claw himself

out. A box was lowered over the beast, he was starved into seeking food in it, and the huge door then closed by a strong wire. This particular animal made thousands of roubles for his captors, for he was taken overland to St Petersburg, exhibited, and finally deposited there, in the Zoological Gardens.

During a visit of mine to Siberia, in 1885, a dramatic incident occurred in a grand hunt given by a Russian general, near Possiette Bay. Two hundred soldiers, with double belts of cartridges and their seven-shooter rifles of enormous calibre, were marshalled as a line of beaters, a yard apart, to drive the game down a long, narrow neck about fifteen miles long.

The general and his guests, well mounted, awaited the coming of the heavier game at the most advantageous firing line, the beaters having orders to cease firing on arriving in the vicinity. The sport was going bravely on ; elk, bear, deer and wolves were falling right and left, when, with a roar, a gigantic tiger made a

dash for the general, and, disdaining a volley from the hardy foot soldiers posted near him, dragged down both horse and general.

The faithful soldiers of the Czar closed in, and the result of the *mêlée* was a dead charger, his throat torn open with a single sweep of the claws, a badly wounded general, and four dead soldiers, two of whom were killed by the frantic animal, and two accidentally shot in the wild firing at short range to save the commander's life.

It was in early October, '85, that a young Manchurian lad of eighteen left Vladivostock for a week's elk and deer hunt in the great forest sweeping to the Ussuri River. The hunter's companion was a stocky-built young Russian hunter, Ivan Ortich, about twenty-three years of age, and they had been, for a couple of years, companions in the chase. The deer and elk sold well in the bazaar market at Vladivostock, the skins and pelts of smaller animals gave them a good revenue, and they had, following the needs of their trade, obtained

a good battery from the ample stores of the German traders.

Ivan had a good Winchester Express rifle Agar, the young Manchurian, a seven-shooting Hotchkiss rifle, and, each bore the heavy Smith & Wesson eight-inch army revolver slung over their necks by a diagonal double leather thong.

A heavy hunting-knife and a hatchet were hung from their belts by a light chain, and under their felt-lined leather jackets were their doubled cartridge belts.

They took with them but one pony with their slender supplies, it being their custom to hang up the deer and elk on a staging of poles, after disembowelling the game, and in case of luck, while one waited on watch with a well-kept-up fire to frighten the wild beasts, the other would return for three or four ponies, or a heavy road sled, to drag home the game.

On this particular occasion the hunters' luck had been exceptional. A band of splendid elk, seven in number, had been rounded up and fallen before the unerring rifles of the friends ;

and five fat deer were also hung up by their heels on forked branches, lopped off five feet above the ground. In the crisp, cool, October nights the game would cool and harden and be in prime market condition at any time during a week. The absence of moisture in the air, and flies, made it an easy matter to keep properly bled and dressed game in a land where salmon, piled up like cord-wood, keep outside the huts all winter, one of these frozen fish breaking like a stone when struck, and where frozen milk in four-foot slabs might serve as policemen's clubs.

Agar was light at heart as he left his friend to tend their girdle of fire, and mounted their only pony to ride into Vladivostock for two ox-sleds to drag home the game, and he joyfully scented a fifty-rouble profit in the game alone, besides the great value of the skin of a superb black fox which he carried rolled up behind his rude saddle.

Ivan was well provided with fagots to feed his fire; he was thoroughly armed, and his

tea-pot simmered gaily on the little camp fire, while his pouch of wild Chinese tobacco had been refilled by his comrade.

It was in the dusk of the next evening that Agar led on his two Corean peasants, each guiding a rough road sled drawn by trained Corean oxen, and neared the scene of their camp. He had been so elated with their unusual success that he had failed to locate the camp correctly, and he bade his two followers await at the nearest recognised point on the main road, while he sought a practicable way through the gloomy forest shades to where his friend was awaiting him.

At last he recognised the clump of heavy cedars around whose bases the game had been hung up, and he could see the faint, blue smouldering smoke of a dying fire. He whooped gaily as he trotted his pony forward, but there was no answering response. He was surprised, and his voice only echoed back in a lonely wail from the woods. He drew up his pony. There were always bad

men. Perhaps some wild Manchurians had overpowered Ivan and taken away the valuable game. Something had happened!

With true Manchurian cunning he leaped off, tied his pony, and then, circling around the camp at a distance of a hundred yards, stole cautiously toward it, his heavy Hotchkiss rifle charged and the magazine turned on. Did he see something moving? He was within fifty yards now. He tried to call out, but his voice died away. Already he was in sight of the forms of the elk lying piled on the rude platform, and the smaller deer hanging from the branches. Keeping trees in line ahead of him, he stole forward with his finger on the trigger of his rifle. The circle of fire had all smouldered away, and there was no sign of any movement. Had Ivan Ortich become sick and wandered away? He strode boldly across the ring of ashes, to see something lying there prone, which at once his heart told him was his dead friend.

Before he could cry out 'Ivan,' a huge

black and yellow moving object swung down before him and planted its paws on the body of the prostrate hunter.

With a nervous energy, born of desperation, Agar fired thrice point-blank into the breast of the huge monster, and was rolled over by the dying charge of the desperate brute. His Hotchkiss rifle was knocked out of his hand, and fell several feet away from him.

‘Tigers!’ he blankly murmured, as he struggled to his feet; and then, with a yell, the giant mate of the dead animal leaped down upon him from a long, low tree trunk. The beast’s teeth closed in his left shoulder and crushed the bones of his arms like pipe stems.

The heavy leather jacket, with its thick, red felt lining, alone prevented the beast tearing out the arm. And the monster feline, shaking him like a rat, then began to drag him away toward the thick underbrush. His face was turned downward, and at every few pulls the great cat would loosen her hold

and strike him across the back with her claws.

It dawned upon him that the second tiger was infuriated by the loss of its mate, and, his legs catching in some oak scrub, he caught hold of his revolver chain. There was but one instinct now, relief from the yellow-eyed, fire-fanged brute, whose hot breath sickened him. He cocked the Smith & Wesson revolver with his right and fired directly into the tiger's mouth as it clenched its teeth again and again in the poor lad's shoulder. With a snort, the animal threw back its head, and as he lay, ready, dashed on him again, grasping his arm lower down. He now fired his pistol into the brute's ear. With a fearful growl, it closed its teeth into the lower arm and began to paw the ground. He had regained his consciousness, and then thrust the weapon into the tiger's mouth, firing full down its throat.

And then everything seemed to swim around him, he fainted away, and was only

revived by the pain of the Koreans trying to lift him, when they had wandered around and at last stumbled upon the camp.

The cold of the chill evening had stopped his bleeding somewhat, and the frightened peasants had found him with one huge tiger lying dead across his half-devoured friend, and the dauntless Manchurian boy was lying literally in the embrace of the enormous beast with which he had battled to the death.

The shoulder joint was badly lacerated, but the natives knew enough to twist a hide thong around his arm to stop the bleeding artery. Leaving all else there, they carried him to his pony, and one of them caught up poor Ivan's Winchester and a belt of cartridges. They made their way to the main road, and, by a rare chance, met the mail *khibitka*, with a brave officer as passenger.

In half an hour Agar, buried in furs, was being trundled along to Vladivostock.

The gallant officer, with the two Koreans, returned to the scene of the fight. The

story told itself. Poor Ivan had probably been surprised at his supper, and had no time to fire a shot. He had been killed the night before, and the two tigers had torn him to death and then feasted upon the choicest portions of the hard-fought game. Captain Platoff loaded up the whole of the mute witnesses of the hunters' skill and the battle to the death, and escorted the two sleds to the main road, where a party of Cossacks soon arrived from town with help.

The amputation of Agar's arm made him in time almost as good as new, and gave him rank, far and near, as a local hero.

In time he was able to tell the main details of his thrilling adventure, and he strangely profited by the duel to the death. In the splendid Russian military hospital he soon recovered, and the two huge tigers were carefully skinned as proofs of the boy's heroism.

Their skins were cured, were sewed together, and quite neatly stuffed with straw and moss to reproduce their exact physical

dimensions. In a wareroom of Kunst & Albers, the great German trading-house, I saw these huge monsters, and one, which lay along the side of a twenty-foot room, left only one foot between his tail and the end of the room. They were seventeen and nineteen feet long respectively, and it was the female, the seventeen-footer, which had tried to drag Agar away to make a quiet meal of him.

The boy was made a mail carrier guard, and furnished with an artificial arm. He always stated that in his handling the revolver he was, at first, actuated by mere retributive instinct, but that after the first shot his wits somewhat returned, and he felt a fierce desire to finish his enemy by trying to find a vulnerable place. 'I tried once to shoot into her eye,' he said, 'but she was looking at me, and she twisted her head away, and shook me like a rat!' . His last remark always was, as he pocketed a few roubles, '*I do not want to fight any more tigers.*'

A HUNT IN COREA

It was in October eighteen hundred and eighty-five that I found myself coasting along the forbidding-looking shores of Eastern Corea, *en route* for Vladivostock, Siberia, and the Amoor River. There are dreams in life destined never to be realised, usually the rosy-tinged clouds of youthful anticipations, but a singular life itinerary is often brought about by trifling switches from the beaten path. Japan, China, Siberia and Corea were *terra incognita* to my wildest dreams of world-wandering, and yet, in two years, I visited them all twice under the fluctuating, quivering compass card of commercial speculation.

In leaving beautiful Nagasaki, on a splendid steel Clyde-built steamer, sailing under an unpronounceable name, under the Japanese flag, we were not especially *persona grata* in the 'Land of the Morning Calm.' The people

of 'Cho Sen' still remember the descent of Hideyoshi, in fifteen-ninety-seven, when the two hundred thousand matchless Japanese swordsmen swept from Fusan to Pin Yang in one glorious campaign.

Our steamer was one of the largest in the great Japanese mercantile fleet—the *Hiogo Maru*, or *Hiogo Sea Goer*—and my wife and I had the whole magnificent cabin to ourselves. There was only one sturdy Chinese stewardess on board—a comely, big-footed woman, fit to be a bride for 'Tom Bowling.' The engine-room and wardroom were filled with three or four canny Scotsmen, the steam engineers, who never left their cosy haunts, save for the room where they directed the workings of their beautiful marine mechanism, as gracefully finished as jewellery.

The captain was the only other white person in the splendid crew of a hundred and fifty, and a splendid specimen of the north country Scot. He kept up a naval discipline on the boat, and royally entertained

his only two first-class passengers. Andrew Meeker was as fine a fellow as ever sang 'Scots Wha Hae,' or sat around the smoking 'haggis.' Fifteen years in the Japanese service had made him a perfect linguist among the wonderfully acute race, whom foolish tourists designate as the 'little brown men.'

His cruise extended, for nine months of the year, from Nagasaki, across the straits of Corea, to Fusan and Gensan, along the whole coast of Corea, to Russian Siberia, Saghalien, and the mouth of the Amoor River. In the three months when Vladivostock Harbour was closed by ice, his beautiful vessel was used on shorter cruises by the Mitsu-Bishi Steamship Company.

Captain Meeker opened both his heart and his larder to us, and my wife and I had the largest liberty, with twenty superb state rooms to roam around at will. A magnificent steel-bronze coloured Siberian bloodhound was given some mysterious password for us; a superb tailless Corean cat was also introduced,

whose rolling growl was like the thunder of war drums afar, and whose rich red and black-spotted fur was a delightful colour symphony.

The king of all golden macaws was the third cabin pet, and I can never forget the day when macaw, reformed tiger cat and Siberian bloodhound, all wound up in my wife's state-room in a wild tangle of barks, yells and screams, with bronze, yellow and gold, black and red, all mixed in a fighting phantasmagoria.

As we sailed out of the exquisite Nagasaki Harbour, under the white flag with its red ball, past the grim red forts, with the heavy Krupp barkers, ready for Russian or Chinese, we took with us in our ship's company of a hundred deck passengers a four-thousand-ton cargo, and a crew of a hundred and fifty, the germs of that ghastly and silent scourge—the cholera!

But we were merry withal, as we swept along over perfumed seas, passing myriad little twinkling lights of fisher boats at night, and dashing on beyond storied and

castled Tchusima, to dart in and make a first Korean landing at Gensan. We had spent a delightful month in Japan, among the polite and courtly children of the old 'Samauris,' and I was eager to try my extensive hunting battery upon the game of Corea and Siberia. I was furnished forth *à la* Gordon Cumming.

When we had experienced the delights of being hove-to for twelve hours in a howling typhoon, I realised the hardy nerve of the Japanese coasters. Their frail-looking, high-built junks, with the sea sweeping apparently clear through the stern, were seen drifting with sea anchors, while whole families gathered around the rice pot and fish kettles, bidding defiance to rude Boreas.

When I awoke and peered out of the great cabin ports in the beautiful circular harbour of Fusan, I started in horror! Though a splendid temple and some pretty, tree-embowered cottages shone out on Japanese Point, where the old invaders still keep a foothold, the low, thatch-

roofed mud hovels of the Corean town were most filthy and repulsive. Around us rose bare, bleak hills like an amphitheatre, and they were covered with some thousands of white, ghost-like-looking beings, scattered in groups of fifty or a hundred on the rocky knolls.

It looked as if generations of the dead had risen as dread ghosts, startled by the scream of the steam whistle of the *Hiogo Maru*. To rush out, clad only in kimono and pyjamas, and seize the captain's glasses, was my first action.

Meeker gaily laughed. 'There, sir, is half the population of Fusan, and they will sit there all day and watch us till we are hull down. For filthy, cantankerous, idle, noisy, quarrelsome chatterers, cowardly and vicious, the Coreans cannot be matched in the whole world!'

When a dozen lighters came alongside, with a hundred or more of the natives, in their loose, cotton-padded white jackets, and baggy trousers of the same colour, I understood the graveyard spooks who crowded the

bare hills. The tufted hair, clinched in a knot on their bare heads, surmounted frankly coarse and sensual faces. The din and chatter and yells were soon deafening around us. A duplicate board of Korean and Japanese quarantine doctors came off in an official boat and gravely forbade us landing. Our 'cholera' taint had been whispered, and myself and wife were duly sprinkled with perfume from an atomiser, and forbidden to land. While we discharged our Fusan cargo, I watched the native boats bringing us a dozen huge, cylindrical fishes, some twelve to fifteen feet long, and as round as a mainmast. Sections of these, sawed off with a sabre, were stood upright like drums of solid red meat cased in glistening silver.

On the quarter-deck that evening, with my wife, I watched the lights of the forbidden town, and was not sorry when we steamed out and ran along the great, grey-jagged Tiger Mountains, stretching far away to join the Kendeh-a-lin range of Manchuria. Bare,

gloomy, treeless, cold and bleak, their grey volcanic buttresses towered ten thousand feet in the air.

Groups of ugly, rocky islands lay along the coast, and a fearful gale blew off shore for three days. We lay-to, to endeavour to rescue three Coreans who were blown fifty miles out to sea, in an open skiff some thirty feet long. With an out-rigger and a quaint matting sail, steering with an oar, they had a sort of drag out, and absolutely refused to leave their frail craft. Captain Meeker offered to hoist their whole rig on deck, but they defiantly refused to be aided. We tossed them a bag of bread and a keg of water, and left them to the mercy of the God of Storms.

Only here and there could little clearings be seen on the hills, where a little scratched-in rice seemed to be cultivated, the only goods available at Fusan being hides and salted fish. There was no sign of timber, and the breaking waves dashed high on

sharp-fanged cliffs, sixty and eighty feet high. A cheerless and a stormy coast. Nearing Cape Duroch, we saw all the grinding wreckage of a Japanese cruiser churning among the breakers where five hundred brave men had perished. The desire to oblige the few beach-combing Coreans, and to test the power of a heavy double English rifle, led me to 'open fire' on a fifty-foot whale who paddled audaciously near to us. The fifth Boxer cartridge, .577 calibre (specially loaded), finished the largest animal which ever fell to my bag, and only the insurance clause prevented Meeker from towing him into Gensan. But the Coreans who found him, when he drifted ashore, were greatly profited.

A long, wooded, sandy spit, veiling the mouth of a small river, broke upon our view as we steamed into Gensan, the only Korean port next to Possiette Bay, the Russian border town of Pacific Siberia. Three or four hundred flat-roofed mud hovels were strung

along the beach, and a valley opening into a cleft in the enormous mountains twenty miles away showed some signs of cultivation. There was to be seen on the beach two neatly-built European wooden houses, a half-mile north of the Corean town. They had been sent out from England, already jointed up, in ships, to be used by families of two English officials, in some strange way forming the customs staff there.

A three days' stay, while unloading a good half of our cargo, allowed the exiled ladies the privilege of an unexpected visit from a womanly sister fresh from the gay circles of Petersburg, Paris and London.

The excellent corps of Japanese officers took charge of the ship while Andrew Meeker prepared to pilot me into the interior, a score of miles or so, on a hunting trip. Our departure was to be kept a secret from the Corean authorities, who objected to allowing foreigners to enter their houses, roam over their fields, or penetrate the interior.

Our little social circle had, in a body, roamed over the repulsive town of Gensan under guard of several Korean officials, one of whom, in yellow mourning robes, was doomed to be mute for a year as a further mark of mourning, transacting all his business by finger signs, seemingly well understood.

The men, with babies slung in pouches on their backs, seemed to loaf idly in the street, only busied in smoking the vilest native tobacco in long, straight pipes, which seemed to be wind defying.

The women darted into their squalid hovels on our approach, their baggy trousers in no way distinguishing them from the men. I have seen the hovels of all the indigenes of the world, but the Korean hut for filth is the most repulsive. An alarming scarcity of fuel leads to the use of dried cow manure as fuel, the mud floors being perforated with flues built under them.

To disguise our purpose of visiting the interior, Captain Meeker had his smart gig

crew row us into the mouth of the little river above the town before daylight, and, furnished with provisions, bade the crew work well up the river at dark and pick us up at a bend some eight miles above Gensan.

There was a famous old temple to be visited, and a view of the interior western valley, which stretches facing the Yellow Sea from Mauchang to the Silver Plateau. Meeker had never peeped through the defile of the Pwanlung Shan range. The hardy Scot had his fowling-piece, 12-gauge, and a good revolver, with store of cartridges, fine and coarse, and twenty rounds of pistol ammunition. I had my rifle and fowling-piece combined, with fifty rounds of mixed ball, buck and shot cartridges, my revolver, knife and twenty pistol rounds. A good haversack of lunch and two canteens made up our backloads, and we were rigged out in hunters' canvas suits and high boots.

After our boatmen left us, we struck out from the river and passed a brook on a

beautiful old-pointed arch stone bridge, evidently dating back to the days of Kishi. There were numbers of grey stone tablets handsomely engraved with old, obsolete characters, mounted on blocks three or four feet square. These related the virtues of dead men of note, or bore old laws or public inscriptions. The daylight came blushing over the sea.

We had passed abundant flocks of geese, cranes, flamingoes and wild ducks in the marshes, with plovers and snipe galore, but we decided not to fire for fear of alarming the morose dwellers in the valley.

We made careful detours and avoided troops of chattering men and women, mounted straddle on tame oxen, going into Gensan. Lines of women, bearing scanty marketing on a frame of sticks lashed to their backs, plodded along, the men wandering idly after them, smoking the eighteen-inch pipe, and 'toting' the babies on their backs, but, strangely enough, bearing no other burdens. The little fields of rice were triangular plateaus,

arranged so as to drain the one into the other, with rude, rough-stone partitions, and the mud-walled, thatch-roofed hovels were surrounded by compost of trodden manure. Not a wheeled vehicle was to be seen, and the road into the defile soon became only an ox-path, then a trail, and finally a stony path. We passed scattered graveyards, all telling of a dense population in the old days of Chinese and Japanese suzerainty.

In four or five hours we had crowned the defile, and could see the whole valley spread out below—the black, dirty town huddled on the wharfless beach, the two custom-houses, the graceful steel *Hiogo Maru*, with clouds of barges round her, and the fishing boats spread out fan-like over the open roadstead.

We had been geologising, botanising and wondering at the stern struggle for life in the bleak and unfriendly countryside, and, pipe in mouth, jogged along unmindful, perhaps, of frightened villagers running along in a gathering cloud around us, but, so far, as skilfully

concealed as Apache scouts. It was afternoon when we saw the grey domes of the long-looked-for temple shining out in the glen, whence a gurgling brook ran down, to grow into a river and flow into the Yellow Sea.

The temple, which we examined carefully, was empty and deserted. Its gods were dead. Its priests were fled. It had spacious halls and massive columned porticoes. Four rounded domes, with flat lintel openings and several pointed arches, with many rounded columns and flights of steps, all carved of hard grey basaltic stone, were left, with a score of upright tablets, with deeply-engraved characters, to tell of a vanished past. It was a magnificent relic of better days.

There was no song of birds, no cheerful smoke of happy homes, nothing to indicate life or prosperity. Only these relics of a dead worship, which seemed gigantic in a land not now possessed of any of the mechanical powers. It would be impossible for the degraded Coreans of to-day to erect even a single porch of the temple of the vanished gods.

‘And this is the richest valley of the Ham-kiang,’ said Captain Meeker—‘a little rice, millet and beans, a few mangy oxen, half-starved chickens and razor-backed pigs. Barbarous isolation has caused these people to forget the glorious time when their Korean tongue was the parent of the graceful and impassioned Japanese. The Mongol, the Tartar, the Chinese, the Japanese have all ruled here as conquerors, and the fabled wealth of the land is a myth. No one knows if there are five or twenty millions of people in the wretched peninsula; and Tokingen, near here, and Katsuma, are fallen to decay. A few bronze bowls, a few pipes, a little native cotton and tobacco, seem all the valuable products, save hemp, fish and hides. The barbarous policy of excluding foreigners has kept these people in conflict with the Japanese, French and Americans. They have bred in and in, and so lost language, arts and religion. Neither roads nor bridges are available, as

a rule ; the Government is a myth, and a ferocious hatred of Christianity exists.'

'What will become of Corea?' I asked, as we finished our lunch and prepared to hunt back on the northern side of the valley. A great storm seemed to hover over the north-west mountains, and the air was raw and chill.

'Russia, the great national grab-all, will take the peninsula some day, when her secret friendship with China is cemented by the Trans-Siberian railway. Russia seems to be the universal heir of all the dead kingdoms in the East.'

We struck out boldly across the great valley, and soon came in sight of a few dirty huts.

'Rain, varied with snow and sleet, makes this Eastern land desolate,' remarked the captain. 'There are dense woods in the interior, but no roads to provide these people with fuel ; and the coal, gold, silver, lead and copper will be reaped by the hardy Muscovite later. Here is a land with a dark blank of a thousand years' drift backward to barbarism! Chinese,

Tartar, Japanese and Mongol have scourged Corea till its human wheat has been threshed out and only the chaff remains. The women are destitute of every art, the priests beat upon tom-toms to exorcise the devil of sickness, and a frank and besotted immorality governs the rude communities. I know of no hope for Corea but the red ploughshare of the conqueror.'

Skirting the bare hillocks, hurrying along to the northern side of the watercourse, I began to watch for game, tired of the cheerless natural prospects. It was as wild as the moors of Kerguelen Land, and I wondered if any of the huge felines of the Tiger Mountain were hovering in the lonely gullies.

Suddenly, I caught sight of a broken-down shrine, and far below, on the growing stream, a sort of rude mill with stacks of rice paddy. We circled away to avoid the rude villagers and to rouse up some stray game.

'There's a splendid black fox,' whispered Meeker; 'shoot him with your rifle barrel!' I drew a bead as the beautiful animal turned

his head toward us. The rifle rang out and the animal rolled over dead, but the most unearthly screams rose up from the vicinity of the dead animal.

‘That skin is worth a good hundred dollars,’ cried Meeker, as we ran forward to observe the cause of all the outcry.

Alas! for our peace of mind! There was a huddled Corean village in a glen near by, and from it was now issuing a mob of yelling fanatics. An old crone was wildly urging them on. The rifle shot had evidently frightened her into hysterics.

But the harm was done. The foreigners had been seen and recognised! We were fifteen miles from the shore and a good five miles from the bend where the boat with its dozen sturdy sailors awaited us at the big bend of the river. The first pattering drops of rain were falling as Meeker cried, ‘Follow me quickly and quietly. They will stone us to death if they catch us.’

And, with the Scotsman in the lead, we

commenced an energetic retreat, trying to double and elude our pursuers. I had heard of the genial pleasures of the Coreans, who often, from sheer *ennui*, form in two clans and stone each other until the ground is covered with senseless victims.

The sharp missiles began to fall unreasonably close to us, and the yelling mob increased as we dashed along past several other hamlets. I could see that Meeker was studying the topography of the valley.

‘We must not get into the rice fields and be bogged down!’ he cried. ‘Don’t you fire. Leave that to me, and keep the pistols to the last.’

There was no mistaking the determination of the rude mob to punish us *à l’outrance*. Then the showers of stones became thicker, the yells fiercer, and we began to lose breath.

It was in a pouring rain that the Scotch captain at last turned and fired one barrel of his fowling-piece just over the heads of the nearest pursuers.

We gained five hundred yards before they took courage to come on again ; but the gathering mob resolutely set out across the valley to cut us off, realising that to return to Gensan we must cross the one stone bridge over the river which was practicable to lead us into town.

The canny Scot saw the plot. They have no firearms,' he said. 'They evidently want to raise a mob and blockade that bridge so that we will be stopped there and killed with clubs or stones in the night, when we cannot see to shoot. I will fool them.'

And as the sullen rain fell cheerlessly, and the evening shadows began to lower, we marched defiantly along down the valley in the general direction of the grey stone bridge, whose pointed arch we could see gleaming out a couple of miles away. The gathering cloud of our pursuers grew denser, and while the main body marched along to bar our way at the bridge, our only seeming means of escape, a dozen fellows struck out quartering toward us, and I could

see the gleam of bush-cutters or bill-hooks on their shoulders.

It was now, indeed, a hunt in Corea. We were the hunted fugitives, and I noted that this flying wedge seemed determined to bar our way by advancing diagonally across our downward path.

Captain Meeker's brow was stern as he held his No. 12-gauge gun down, the cold rain dripping from its barrels. But one chance remained to us to avoid slaughtering a few of the maddened fools. 'This will cost me my position, and the steamer company may be forbidden to land,' growled Meeker. 'We must not kill any of these fellows; at least, not till we get near to our boat. As soon as we get past this mill we can see the bend, and if the fields are clear we can fool them. They will keep inside of us, and we can make a last run to the boat. They will never know who we are if we can slip down stream.'

The pioneer guard of the chattering and

vindictive crew had worked so near to me that I feared the use of the Manchurian bow and arrow. And men who can shoot through a tiger could easily spit me on their four-foot copper-pointed shafts.

Having had some practice in creasing hares on the Texas frontier, I carefully sent a '577 Boxer ball whizzing about six inches over the heads of the bill-hook carriers. I was careful to see that there were no more old women in range. The whole band dropped on their bellies and we moved on, laughing in spite of our danger.

We had a clear quarter of a mile to ourselves when we approached the mill.

'I'm going to rest for a few minutes, anyway!' resolutely cried Meeker; 'and from that knoll near this rice mill, I can lay out a clear course to the boat.'

We had so timed our return as to have a chance to fill the boat with the magnificent water fowl swarming in the narrow river.

‘It’s not over a mile and a half over there,’ said Meeker, ‘and when we get near, if I fire three shots in rapid succession, my men will come to the rescue. They all have a revolver and a short Japanese sword. There are ten and the coxswain, and we can then whip the whole town of Gensan. Let us put a bold face on it! If there is anyone in the rice mill who speaks Japanese I am all right.’

We strode up to the rude building near the little river, and Meeker pushed open the door. Our dishevelled appearance, the guns in our hands, and the suddenness of our entry, caused half a dozen half-naked Korean women, who were sacking up rice, to leap into the mill stream and disappear in the hollows of the river bank beyond. Two men fled away, and gathering up clubs stood on the defensive.

In the ten minutes during which I stood on guard I saw the uncouth trip hammer still pounding away at the rice paddy. A

huge log, evidently a drift log from the north, had been squared at one end and banded into a huge hammer head. Poised at its middle, the other end of the log was hollowed into a huge spoon; the water from the rude mill filling this, raised the hammer end till the water fell out, and then, the machine dropped with a bang. With about three blows a minute, this machine was pounding out the rice from the sheaves thrust under the hammer by the nymphs who had fled. There was, perhaps, a thousand pounds of rice in the whole mill's supply on hand.

When Meeker had scrambled down from his post of observation we cleaned our muddy boots, re-girded ourselves, trimmed our loads, and in the dying light struck out boldly for the bend now clearly visible.

'The boat is there, thank God!' cried the captain. 'I can see the white flag and the red ball in the stern. Now, these fellows may have hidden a few marauders

in front of us. I have just four mustard-seed cartridges that I found in my vest pockets. I have used them to knock down some pretty plumaged pheasants. You are not to shoot. I will clear the way with these four if they try to stop us. Remember, no real shooting in earnest, unless to save our lives, and—then—back to back, and fight it out!’

We had lost our patience, and could see the two men who had left the rice mill pointing and encouraging on our assailants. With artful skill Meeker led me along the the river bank parallel to its course, as if striking for a bend below the place where the boat lay. We were nearly abreast of the bend, when a dozen dark figures leaped upon us from ambush. The captain’s fowling-piece barked twice, and then repeated the smarting dose, while I stood ready to fire with buck and ball. Several jagged stones grazed us, but as we ran on we could hear the howls of pain as the angry wretches

slapped their peppered legs. We moved swiftly over the sedgy salt grass, and, to our inexpressible delight, soon saw the boatswain leading on eight of our sturdy fellows at a run to meet us. It seemed the very happiest moment of my life when I tumbled into the stern-sheets of the ship's boat.

There were none of the pursuers in sight as we swept along down the river under the propulsion of ten bending oars. The captain steered us artfully so as to hide us, and, as we passed the bend, we could see the white, ghost-like forms of the simple Koreans crowding on the bank. A couple of torches blazed out behind us for some time, and we guarded a judicious silence. There were several bottles of warm saki in the boat, and, covered with a dry boat-cloak, I lay at ease, until, three hours later, I was delivered over to the care of the good-humoured head Chinese steward of the *Hiogo Maru*.

The town of Gensan was convulsed for

the remainder of our stay by the stories drifting in from up the valley of three fire-breathing devils who had attacked the innocent villagers. One of them vanished, turning into a beautiful dead fox at the feet of an old woman, who had called on the sacred names of Buddha and Tao and Shinto, all in one breath! The other two 'fire breathers' had spit poison fire all over the boldest of their pursuers, and then rushed madly into the river, where they disappeared in fiery whirlpools! All this and more was reported to the Corean and Japanese officials, and I learned the lesson for life of keeping out of the clutches of a morose mob of ignoramuses. Our bodies were bruised with the sharp stones, and, chilled and sickened, we had only reaped in sore bones and wearied bodies the useless fruits of our hunt in Corea, from which we came out bootless. A number of equally innocent foreigners have been murdered from time to time by the unruly brutality of this most unlovely of all nations.

BOY AGAINST GRIZZLY

ONE of the strangest features in the character of the grizzly bear of North America is his change of deportment according to his surroundings.

Ursus ferox is a perfect example of Mr Herbert Spencer's theory of 'heredity' and 'environment.' This lumbering fellow, usually from six to nine feet in length, and weighing from four hundred to two thousand pounds, has certain traits of heredity—his gameness, his slyness, and his well-marked preferences.

'Environment' may make him a jolly Friar Tuck of the woods, or a crafty 'man-eater,' hunting the trails with the malignity of the fiercest tiger. In a well-watered acorn country, and where roots, nuts and succulent bulbs can be obtained, he follows a live and let live policy. In dry localities, like inner Arizona and the hills of San Bernardino

County, California, he becomes a terror by day and night. Under similar circumstances, the grizzly bear is far more formidable than the dreaded lion, tiger or panther. He loses no heart at missing a single spring, but grimly fights on to the last, especially with a cub included in the game of life or death.

I have seen a dozen cavalrymen 'pumping lead' into a patch of bushes where a grim old she bear received seventeen Springfield rifle bullets before giving up the ghost. And no man dared to explore that bit of blood-stained underbrush!

Age adds an extreme ugliness to the grizzly's 'personal' equation. The teeth are worn off, the huge claws and the death grapple are relied on, and his giant strength and deadly pluck made him a terror at close quarters.

In the early days of '49 to '52 vast herds of mustangs roved the interior plains of the Sacramento and San Joaquin in California. Huge droves of elk commingled with the 'prodigal sons' of the Conquistadore's

chargers, deer in enormous numbers peacefully grazed with yellow, flitting bands of antelope, and along the sloughs and rivers giant grizzlies then made their favourite haunts.

They loved to wallow in the tule marshes and to fatten upon the bulbed rushes. Their vegetarian living led them away from flesh seeking. On the broad plains, the other nimbler animals could easily elude them, and they lazily followed up the countless thousands of wild cattle and sheep, gorging upon the animals which dropped from the herd.

It was easy for anyone to avoid this huge, over-fattened grizzly in the open country, and, in those days of single-shooters and half-ounce balls, the big grizzly of the plains held his hide by 'simple possession.'

The expert 'vaqueros,' in numbers of a dozen, soon gauged the degenerate grizzly of the plains. They loved to lasso him, and in open country they were his masters, mounted on their quick-turning lasso horses.

But a change came. The steamboats soon

puffed up through Stockton Slough, the plains were appropriated, and *Ursus ferox*, driven to the most worthless mountain ranges, became a robber by day, a sly thief by night, and his habits sensibly changed in ferocity. It was a 'black flag' and no quarter for those who met him on the trail. The coast range, the lower Sierra Nevadas, and the southern chapparal hills became his home, and he changed his bill of fare, often through necessity.

Though his cousins, the 'silver tip,' the 'cinnamon,' his northern relative, the polar bear, are game enough, they have not the grim dash of the big grizzly, whose 'hereditary' courage vainly struggles against the newer 'environment' of explosive bullets, multicharge repeating rifles, and the heavy modern cartridge. In these piping days of amateur bear slayers, the grizzly's chance is reduced to that of the individual stockholder fighting a powerful syndicate—he is doomed from the first.

In the old days a pack of cur dogs was the only aid to the real frontier bear hunter, these useful auxiliaries gaining time for the hunter to reload, or gain a tree to readjust his batteries.

Only real huntsmen can appreciate the wonderful development of the offensive weapons of man in the last forty years. From the single-shot muzzle-loading rifle, with its half-ounce ball and absurdly light powder charge, to the Winchester Express, or the thousand-yard Sharp, the development is as marked as the difference between Columbus's three caravels and the *Paris, St Paul* and *New York*.

In the olden days the 'honours were easy,' and now the chances are decidedly 'agin the b'ar,' unless the hunter becomes paralysed with fear, or his walking 'machine shop' refuses to work. It is doubtful if any of the young 'cannons' used by British sportsmen against 'rhino,' elephant and giraffe have ever been used in America, nor even the almost faultless double-barrelled Express rifles, with inde-

pendent locks. The last are powerful enough to kill anything that moves, and the chances of a sudden breakdown are almost eliminated.

The Spencer, Hotchkiss, Remington, and the army Springfield rifle in the hands of a cool man are 'deadly weapon' enough to kill anything on the American continent, save a veteran book agent.

The effect of 'environment' upon 'Mr Grizzly of California' was demonstrated in the forty days' flood and three months' storm of 'sixty-two,' which reduced California to an inland sea, and drove the wild animals of the coast range and sierras down into the foot hills, starving and abnormally ferocious.

The smaller animals perished by myriads, the deer died by thousands, their drenched and weakened carcasses being unfit for food. Grass, nuts, acorns, the winter housekeeping stores of the denizens of the woods, were rotted, swept away, or covered up in the uprooted forests. Whole areas of pines and redwoods thundered into ravine and canyon,

and the 'clearing house' of Nature was busied for several seasons.

It was at my boyhood residence on the Soquel Creek, in Santa Cruz County, in the afflicted Golden State, that, almost under my eye, a California boy fought out, alone, a vendetta with a 'three-star' grizzly.

During the terrible visitation, Morris White, a determined-looking Pike County youth, had housed in an upland field his entire store of worldly wealth—a yoke of splendid oxen. There was store of hay in the squatter's barns, and in the rearrangement of the 'wreck of matter and the crush of worlds' the young Missourian and his oxen were worth ten dollars a day, either to the county or the owners of the sawmills about 'resuming operations' after the flood. The particular mills I referred to sawed away for two years on timber which had been hurled down the loosened and quaking mountain sides almost to the very carriages of the gleaming 'double circulars.'

As the oxen furnished the 'pull,' and Morris White only the 'generalship,' by the liberal use of the ox gad, the young man, counting off the days at an eagle per day, was rapidly becoming a capitalist.

At night, his 'Dime' and 'Baldy' were securely garnered up within an impregnable corral surrounding the delta of the junction of two creeks where the mills were located. Into this enclosure a ridge, too steep for any hoofed animal, ran and formed a sort of nether rampart. It was a pleasant dawn of day in later April, when the lank Missourian, with the yoke already resting on 'Baldy's' neck, loudly called for 'Dime' to join his mate under the yoke. There was the soft bed where the yoke-fellows had rested, and the youthful contractor, ox bow in hand, skirmished around for the other half of his worldly fortune.

An extended search, where a clump of enormous trees braced up the spinal ridge, showed to the astounded Pike County lad

the carcass of the non-appearing 'Dime.' The story told itself. There lay the poor animal, its neck broken with a terrific blow, and the head turned under. A considerable anatomical disappearance on the brisket and foreshoulder told that the 'red slayer' had made a satisfactory meal.

The woodsmen of the camp were called into council, and Morris himself, a mighty hunter for one so youthful, swore oaths which set the balmy morning air tingling. There was the twelve-inch track, the great, spread-out hand, and the long, heavy heel. It was Mr Grizzly who had sidled along, down the mountains, and scenting the warm-blooded prey, with one blow of its mighty paw had laid out poor 'Dime' for ever.

In one fell swoop he had paralysed White's engineering operations. Oxen were as gold and diamonds in those days, and 'Baldy' and 'Dime' were cases of the survival of the fittest. The chance that any other neighbour would break up a span of well-broken oxen to fill

the half-empty yoke was a slender one. The one-half of his team would either be useless, or be sacrificed to some thrifty bargainer, while he himself must exchange 'generalship' for a more active means of making a living.

He had followed his fearless old father down the Platte four years before, and, as that old frontier warrior put it, 'had fit the painted Injins in the Bad Lands.' They had buried one or two of the whites in that long drag from 'St Jo' to Fort Bridger, then on to Salt Lake, down the Humboldt, and standing off fierce Cheyenne, murderous Sioux and thieving Ute, had 'pre-empted' a very large and lightly-held domain in Santa Cruz County.

Familiar with attempted stampede and derisive scalp yell, nerved by standing guard and 'pot shots' from the wagon square at the saucy nomads of the plains, Morris White swore a deadly vengeance against the grizzly who had laid out the 'Benjamin' of his small flock. 'Dime' was an ox of many engaging

qualities, and he represented the 'unearned increment' of the Pike County boy's fortunes. With 'Dime' fortune flowed in upon him; without him, the contracting business was a failure, and it would take nearly a hundred dollars to replace the departed one.

The day passed with Morris White gloomily inspecting the scene of the disaster. An absence of two or three hours enabled him to place 'Baldy' under the charge of one of his brothers, with a consolatory arrangement that the ox should be 'worked on shares.'

And then, having gathered up what little armoury he could procure, the defiant young Missourian laid away his yokes and chains until he should have done battle with 'that there b'ar,' as he scornfully termed him, with two extremely clenching defamatory words interjected between the words 'there' and 'b'ar.'

One of the head sawyers strolled over before sundown and found that the lad had bored several holes into a soft fir tree about fifteen feet from the ground. With strong

oaken sticks, well wedged in, he had made the foundation for a platform composed of two eight-inch boards six feet long and lashed to the supporting sticks.

A can of water and a bag of saleratus biscuits, with some cold fried bacon, were his rations, and his offensive weapons consisted of an old Mississippi muzzle-loader, a German horseman's carbine of unearthly appearance, and a battered six-shooter.

'Do you mean to say you propose to kill that bear with that rig,' cried the astonished lumberman.

'It's him or me!' sullenly replied Morris. 'He has busted up my business just as I struck the first streak of luck in my life, and I'll get him, or he'll get me.'

'I'm afraid he'll get you, Morris,' said the kindly visitor. 'You'll get tired, and fall off your perch.'

'I reckon not,' grinned Morris, showing two horse shoes which he had heated, drawn out, and driven into the tree up to the heads.

‘There! With them two horse-shoe clamps and a lariat tied around my waist run through the eyes, I can’t fall off.’

Big Jim Hall was agnostic. ‘The bear may come up to you! If he pulls your whole rig down, where are you?’

‘He won’t get to me,’ doggedly answered the boy. ‘I’ll be getting to him all the time.’

And so, at evening fall, the millmen helped to place the lad in position, perched up where he would have a good view of the remains of ‘Dime,’ and a chance to even up. The fifty men at the mill agreed to chip in a dollar apiece if the invader were really slain. ‘That’s half an ox,’ hopefully said Morris. ‘And I’ll get the rest of the money outen the b’ar.’

The lad had smeared the tree and his trail with the lights and stomach offal of the dead ox to obliterate any human scent. He hung on his uncomfortable perch for two weary nights without result, and during the day he began to run the gauntlet of many jokes.

But a few squatters were attracted by the boy's venture, and one of them, who had notches on his rifle and six-shooter for men, as well as 'b'ar' and 'bison,' with 'elk' and 'panther' to match, sagely observed, 'A grizzly always gorges and comes back when his prey is a little gamey. That b'ar will soon be along.' And, in support of his theory, he begged the boon of the one decent shooting-iron in the gulch, the six-shooting Colt's rifle, which was our local pride.

'I'll pay for the gun if anything happens to it. I want the boy to have a show as well as the b'ar. I'm somehow doubtful of that rig of his.' And he made some slugs of preternatural hardness, and most carefully heavily charged the six barrels of the revolving rifle—'plum up,' as he pithily put it.

The third night of Morris White's vigil was dark and chill; the wind sighed through the pines, and a knot of wiseacres sat around the great fire in the log cabin and 'arguefied' upon the chances. 'There's been so many human

footprints around that the "b'ar" is grown suspicious,' said one. 'Mayn't been a b'ar—a panther,' said another. 'There's the tracks, and the way he wuz killed,' lucidly rejoined another. 'He's sure to come back—and—get the boy, too,' said old Uncle Able, who had been a trapper of might in his younger days. 'The boy's foolhardy. What could we do to help him?' It was only two hundred yards over the ridge, and three hundred around the point, to where the determined lad was keeping his lonely vigil.

I had myself eyed him as one who begs that his name will be put down first in a list for a Balaclava charge, or any useless personal feat; but late that night I lay and listened to the song of the pines. The wild forest was vocal, and the purest air on earth was sweeping down the terrific rocky gorges of Williams Creek. I had apparently ignored a remark made by Eben Wright, 'There's nothing to prevent the "b'ar" coming in here if he wants to.' That hospitable cabin door

was never locked for ten years. I indulged 'a pleasing hope,' however, that the 'b'ar' would prefer the remains of 'Dime' to our party in the cabin.

I sprang to my feet in the gloomy hours before dawn as a heavy rifle-shot rang out, seemingly at my side, and while the men sprang to their feet, another and another sounded, the last two so near to each other that they seemed to be one report, and then came a dead silence. It was broken by an unearthly yell, fully up to the standard later set for me by the Apaches and Sioux, past-masters of all vocal arts.

It was old Uncle Able who dashed to the dying fire and seized a burning brand. 'Let's all go over, men, and see what's happened!' There was a repetition of the yell, and two quick shots, evidently from the revolver.

'The b'ar's got him, sure enough,' cried Eben Wright, as he grasped a brand and said, 'I'm one to go, who else?' Then we all realised that there was not a weapon on

the place but a little unloaded pistol and a broken-down shot-gun. The party assembled in front of the cabin. There was a dead silence, broken only by the sighing of the pines, but as we moved forward to go around the road to the point, whirling the blazing brands, something sped up from the rear of the corral. It was Morris White—hatless, breathless, and, as was described later, on the dead jump like a scared coyote!

We dragged him into the cabin, and candles were the order of the growing day. One man produced a drop of whisky, and then the youth threw himself into a rough chair and passed his hands aimlessly through his hair. His revolver was dangling by a thong, and also his hunting knife.

‘What’s happened to you?’ ‘What’s come of the bear?’ an excited chorus cried.

‘He’s over there, chuck full of lead, I hope — dern him!’ growled Morris, as he picked up his dangling knife and pistol. His face was bleeding from the effects of a fall.

‘Tell us the whole story!’ growled ‘old Uncle’ Able. ‘Did he get away from you?’

‘No. I got away from him! He’s big as a house — too!’ angrily cried the Pike County lad. ‘I was half-asleep, chilled and cold, when he come a-tumblin’ and a-snortin’ down the hillside. He nozed around ugly, and snuffed all over poor “Dime.” Then he gave him one wipe with his paw and turned him over, as if he was a dead coyote. I waited till I got a good aim, and let him have it. And then he made straight for that tree. He roared, and got his claws in the cracks of the fine bark, and started to comin’ up. I fired twice plump into his breast, and I lost my nerve when I seed him so near me by the flash of the gun, and then I dropped my rifle!’

‘He was growlin’ and groanin’ awful, and he started a-comin’ up again, and then I hollered. I give him two shots of the revolver right in his mouth, and then, with one swing of his claw, he carried off the whole staging.

‘There I was left hanging on the lariat, and I couldn’t reach the pistol I had dropped, but, it was tied in my belt.

‘I swung over, head down, and began to choke, and when I heard the bear a-wallowin’ around down in the creek, I cut the lariat with my knife, and down kerchunk I come. *See here!* I ran down back into the corral, and fell over a dozen stumps, but here I am! He didn’t get very far. In the mornin’ I’ll get Pop’s hounds and find him. He’s mortal badly wounded!’ There was a grim silence as the defiant Pike County lad glared at his audience. ‘Most of you all told me a grizzly couldn’t climb! This one could, you bet our life! It was only the third rifle-shot that laid him out somewhat.’

In the early dawn we visited the scene, and from a safe distance observed the body of the slain ‘ox’ pulled around as described. Morris White’s perch was dangling from one stick still wedged in the breast of the pine. The rifle lay there at the foot of the tree.

The torrents of blood staining the silver gray bark of the pine led to a trail ending in the bushes near the little creek. It was Morris White who had caught up the rifle, and ran up the steep hillside. 'Hold on, all!' he yelled, and then he sent a ball whizzing down into the rushes. 'He's dead as a mackerel!' the delighted lad cried, and we were soon gathered around the gaunt carcass. The Missouri lad had reached him every time.

And now came settling day! The fifty-dollar subscription, twenty-five dollars for the skin, twenty-five dollars from the nearest Chinese for the gall, and thirty dollars for the meat and fat, enabled the youth to replace the lamented 'Dime' and have a small surplus. 'But,' he frankly declared himself, 'I ain't a-huntin' no grizzly b'ar any more. This fellow was a nine-hundred pounder, and a leetle too big for me!'

WHY THE MAIL CAME LATE

ONE of the most unwelcome stations in the West at the close of the war was the territory of Arizona. The civil government was almost powerless, and the murderous Apaches held the whole interior. The unorganised territory was sparsely settled, and Camp Grant, Camp Apache, Camp M'Dowell, Camp Whipple and Camp Mohave were the only strongly-held points in the land of Gold and Blood, with Fort Yuma, on the Colorado River, as the base of supplies. There were but two towns—Prescott and Tucson—of any magnitude.

The mails and army supplies, forwarded by steamer *viâ* the Gulf of California to Fort Yuma, were transported at enormous expense over the Old Southern Overland Mail Route.

One of the bright ideas of the Confederate leaders had been to incite the Indians of the Northern Plains to break up the Northern

Overland Mails to the Pacific Coast, and, in the fall of '61 and spring of '62, the Texan cavalry swept along from Texas and New Mexico, over the southern route, through Arizona to Antelope Peak, only sixty miles from the Pacific Ocean, at the nearest point of the Gulf of Mexico. There is a tradition that a few hardy Texan Confederates rode over the seashore and dipped their flags in the water of the western ocean. I climbed Antelope Peak, nine hundred feet, to see the stump of the mast on which they left the stars and bars flying defiantly when they retired before Carleton's command, first burning and plundering all the mail stations.

From '65 to '68, the commanders of the army posts named above were the conservators of all law and order. Backed up by six or eight companies of mixed infantry and cavalry at each post, they kept the roads open, escorted trains, guarded the mails, and moved on the civilians who were forced to travel.

The troops were partly reliable regular regiments, and others, filled up with the riff-raff scattering westward after the war. Guerrillas, deserters, marauders, and all manner of Ishmaelites swarmed from El Paso to Fort Yuma, and a 'trial of title by force' usually followed the possession of useful plunder. The Apaches, posted on high ground, narrowly watched the sending out of heavy scouts, and, signalling all over by mountain fires, then incited the fierce Hualapais and others to harry the weakened garrisons. Artillery was useless, the men suffered from chills and fever, they became dejected and deserted, and the humble potato (when canned and desiccated) alone kept off deadly scurvy. The officers and troops were paid in currency, only available at sixty cents, and a gentle admixture of grinding poverty varied the lives of men fairly certain of being scalped some day.

Camp M'Dowell, a strong post on a mountain near the junction of the Verde and

Salt River, was the link connecting Prescott and Fort Whipple with the blazing cremation post of Fort Yuma.

An ugly canyon, some twenty miles long, led down past the Salt River and Superstition Mountains toward Maricopa Wells, and this region was haunted by the wild Apache bucks from four counties—Graham, Gila, Pinal and Maricopa.

This mail route from Camp M'Dowell to Maricopa Wells intersected the line of the buckboard express flying on, never halting day or night, from Fort Yuma to Tucson. This line rested somewhat upon the settled Gila, the friendly Indians along its banks keeping the Apaches north, but after the Prima villages were passed the buckboard express always faced dangers similar to M'Dowell canyon in the graveyard defile of the Picacho, along the Santa Cruz River to Tucson. On both wings of the route intelligent marauders awaited to murder the mail-carriers when any unusually valuable mail

or remittances were in transit, and the freemasonry of crime seems to warn all evil-doers in advance of the tempting plunder. Trains, paymasters' escorts, wagon outfits, express riders, had been systematically entrapped for years in a land admirably laid out for villainy.

The condition of affairs was almost desperate in eighteen sixty-eight, when I was serving with a small command in these murder pens, wondering whether desperate marauders or sly Indians would have the honour of my taking off. There were wistful farewells when anyone fared forth upon a journey, especially when the troops were scouting, for the deadly villains, red and white, pressed closer then to all the important places left weakened. And the strange lottery of life, the doctrines of chances! I was witness of a timid New York bride, leaving luxury in New York to travel safely over the wildest scenes of Arizona with a strangely reckless young husband, the surrender of a dog tent to them, with a couch of river rushes on the

insect - infested sands, being accepted as Arabian hospitality, capped with beans, bacon, hard-tack and muddy coffee. So far will love, mighty love, blind the children of Cupid ! These amiable infant tenderfeet could have crossed the plains alone in safety, I am sure ; and the same season, near me, a gallant officer, the hero of a score of desperate Indian fights, was instantly killed by one random shot fired by a good-natured but drunken Indian.

My other guest, in that dog tent and centipede and tarantula-infested shakedown, was a brilliant young officer, who closed three years of desperate service, fighting the mad Apaches, to take a gilded staff appointment in the Department of Oregon. He rode down through the Picacho, a revolver in each hand, the wild steeds dashing along under a scattering Apache fire, to reach me at Sweetwater in safety.

‘ I am now safe. I have passed all my dangers,’ he said, in bidding me ‘ adieu.’ ‘ I have earned a safe place. I shall be married in the spring.’ And as I divided my slender

stores with him, and he showed me, proudly, the pictured face of a beautiful girl, neither he nor I knew that the Apache bullets were never cast to kill him, but that he was on his way to die like a dog, beside his gallant General, and be scalped by the cowardly Modoc brutes, two thousand miles away.

It was written in the stars! In a desperate fight that season in the Picacho canyon, where twenty-seven men were murdered by the Apaches, the only survivor was an eleven-year-old Mexican boy, unable to lift a hand in his own defence. Death deliberately danced around him, leaving him to await his own allotted time of doom!

I had learned to wonder at the uselessness of various expedients to work the mail through M'Dowell canyon. Large escorts would be attacked and followed from the heights. Stones and bullets would hail down upon them. A single man might get through. The trains would be safe at night for a time, and then the tactics of the red fiends would change.

There was every variety of assorted deviltry going on. In many of the gravest frontier disasters secret information has been undoubtedly smuggled out by infamous agents of the enemies of peace. Scallawags, refugees, pretended friendly Indians, infamous Mexicans, Apaches dressed up as Pimas, Papagoes or Maricopas, have penetrated into the very camps, and then 'laid for the victims,' almost within gun-fire of the baffled garrison. In a thousand schemes some are sure to succeed, and the thieving, cowardly, brutal Apache had every means to make his attempt a reasonably sure one. The policy of sending the mail carriers out secretly, and giving them every latitude of route, worked well for a time, and even brave Mexican riders were hired to run the gauntlet.

After a time M'Dowell canyon became full of rude crosses, with piles of stones thrown around them, where human blood had slaked the arid soil.

It was in this delightful suburban resort that I flushed my first Apache. Two wagons and a small detachment toiling on through the

pass were guarded by a dozen riflemen in the wagons and a half-dozen scouts marching in readiness; a couple of men closed up as rear guard; and on this particular evening I worked out in advance of two men in the lead. The relief from the blazing hell of the day was the only comfort, and in the enjoyment of a huge briarwood pipe I strolled along, with the usual self-consolatory feeling—‘There is not an Indian within fifty miles!’

My heavy revolver was belted on, but I did not even think of it as I turned a bend in the road and came plump on a shock-headed brute sitting on a rock looking down into the canyon. A bow and quiver were upon his back and a rifle lay across his knees. The distant rattle of a trace chain caught his ear and he turned his head. We were not ten feet apart.

By a mere mechanical motion of surprise I grasped the heavy pipe from my mouth, and ‘the party to whom I had not been introduced’ evidently thought I was going to shoot him in the back. It was hardly possible for him to

turn, as his legs were dangling over, and I presume that he made a wild grab for his rifle to save it. I could have pushed him over, and probably broken his neck. But from sheer habit that pipe clung to my fingers as if it had been tarred.

When I had regained my presence of mind and 'yanked' out my revolver, the Indian let himself go, and over the cliff he went, dropping out of sight like a panther leaping down into darkness. The whole performance was no more creditable to the Apache brave than to the 'regular army-oh!' He had no time to recover from his 'stage fright,' and when I sent two shots spinning down into the darkness after him, the two foremost riflemen were at my side.

It was an anxious half-hour after that, till our safety from attack proved that he was probably a runner making his way across M'Dowell canyon to the Maricopa divide. Our forward route would have left us exposed to be peppered, with no return, for we could not get away. I was perfectly delighted to

find that I 'had killed as many of him as he did of me,' and that, from perfectly natural causes, he could not fire his rifle at me through his own back. I devoutly hope that this follower of Cochise broke his neck in tumbling down the cliff, which was a fairly rocky canyon side. There has been no mention of this engagement made in any 'official reports,' and I only hope, for his reputation as a warrior, that he said as little to his chief as I did to mine. It was simply, after all, an informal meeting of two savages.

But it was a result of the uncertain chances of life in M'Dowell canyon that, after a few more depletions of the garrison by sporadic murder, the soldiers began to commit trivial offences which led to their being placed in Camp M'Dowell guard-house. An acute-minded post-adjutant discovered this, and found that many of the wearied out and dispirited men preferred to trudge up and down the hill, wearily carrying back loads of fresh water for the garrison from the river, than to risk being

scalped or having their heads beaten flat with stones.

The ways of the 'old soldier' are past finding out. Thrice happy is the man who can invent diseases of appalling frequency and weird, unfamiliar character, and so spend a fair share of his enlistment snugly in hospital, playing 'Seven Up,' 'California Jack,' and fattening while his pay runs on.

There were several soldiers at the Camp M'Dowell whom the adjutant could have better spared than other men who died under the knife or arrow. Among these was notably 'Private Patrick Maguire, of a chequered army career. Names were to him as things of protean hue. Enlistments he had shed as the serpent does its worn-out skin, and he was a past master of every art of malingering by flood and field. The last twenty-five years have brought into the 'regulars' as fine human stock as ornaments any service; but immediately at the close of the war, a regiment on

Western service was the best place to hide an uncomfortable personal record. These bad men were not in a majority, but they leavened the whole mass, and several commands in the territories had the reputation of 'trying on their young officers' to the verge of mutiny. It was with the design of forcing a fair division of dangerous duty that the post-adjutant obtained an order that the 'guard-house men' should be drafted equally with the 'duty men' for the running of the mail gauntlet. A tacit understanding at Maricopa Wells that the men should be well fed and refreshed with the 'strong waters of Kentucky' made the detail, at last, rather a popular one. Private Patrick Maguire was delving in his well-furnished brain for schemes whereby to profit by his dangerous duties. The appeasing of his Tantalus thirst was always 'a well-spring of joy'; but it was to him and his partner, Tom Doolan, that the formation of the Whisky Express was due!

Given two excellent mules, each man armed

with a revolver and good Springfield breech-loader, with double belts of ammunition, the singular pair made bi-weekly trips, with great success, for a time. A dozen bottles of whisky, purchased at Maricopa for a dollar each, and buried just outside the guard lines, were always promptly retailed at five dollars a bottle to men who had no other means of spending their pay. The all-pervading 'spiritual influence' which enlivened Camp M'Dowell was for a long time undiscovered, until a little rencontre, which permanently broke up the Whisky Express.

The most perfect latitude had been given to the two chums, who departed as they listed, made the trip as they liked, and came into the post from different directions, sometimes by night, sometimes by day. Discharged men going away, settlers from the Verde, and casual travellers, often swelled their little party. A condemned quartermaster's mule was given them to pack the mail on, and the canyon seemed to have lost some of its terrors.

But, like 'that boat on the Mississip,' a fatal night came when the two daredevils were jogging along up the canyon, with the laden mule trotting peaceably between them. There were twenty-four bottles of whisky balanced across the pack-mule, with the mail sack strapped over the illicit pack. A rattling volley from above to the right brought poor Tom Doolan off his riding animal at the first fire!

'Save yourself, Patsy,' he cried. 'I'm hit!'

'Crawl up into the rocks under the cliff. I'll be with you in a jiffy,' huskily cried Maguire, as he cut away the mail bag and ran swiftly up under the overhanging rocks! It still lacked two hours of daylight, and Maguire was back like a flash! With his hunting-knife he cut away the ammunition pouches from the riding mules, and then sent them clattering along the road. 'We've a few minutes to hide before they'll be down!' He had snatched up Doolan's rifle and found the very spot he wanted—a re-entrant hollow under the overhanging bluff at a bend, where

a pile of ragged rocks had slid down from the hill over them.

With the smartness of an old soldier he had wrenched away the water canteens from the saddle bow of the riding animals.

While he aided Doolan to hide himself in the rocks, Maguire listened to a fusillade two hundred yards up the road.

‘By hokey!’ he cried, ‘they’re peppering the mules!’ And while he retrieved all his useful articles, he found that Doolan had already got his handkerchief twisted around his thigh and cramped tight with his revolver barrel.

‘They’ll not find us till daylight, maybe,’ cried Maguire, as he heaped up a barricade of the loose stones, while he cheered the wounded partner of the Whisky Express. ‘In five minutes, if they hold off, we’ll have a snug little fort here. Try and be aisy, now, Tom, till I can help you!’ With the haste of desperation, Maguire loaded the two Springfields, laid them ready, and brought his revolver round to the front.

‘If we had but a bit of the whisky,’ groaned Maguire. ‘I’ve two flasks in me blouse pockets, inside,’ groaned Doolan. ‘If they hold off half an hour, glory be to God, we may stand them off!’ whispered Maguire, as he tugged away at his breast-high wall. There was the sound of triumphant yells far up the canyon ringing out now!

‘Ah! the devils!’ groaned Maguire. ‘They’ve caught the mules now. When it’s light, and they find no sign of us, they’ll be down here after our scalps!’

The ‘first aid to the injured’ of Private Tom Doolan was soon replaced by a strong tourniquet of Maguire’s suspenders, well twisted up with the piece of a dried branch. A few gulps of the whisky and Doolan was set up on his knees, propped up behind the stone barricade, his revolver in his hand and Maguire’s revolver slipped in the empty holster.

‘You’re not to shoot unless they rush, remember, Tom!’ cautioned General Maguire; ‘I

can stand them off, with the two guns!’ They had doubled cartridge belts and forty extra rounds for rifle and revolver in the saddle pockets.

The men both knew what a grim death awaited them! For the Apaches craved the weapons and ammunition to be found belted around the bodies of the men whom they supposed they had killed.

Firing a volley directly at the advancing noise, the Indians were misled by the positions in which they found the animals, which, by instinct, had trotted leisurely along on their homeward road.

And while the two soldiers at bay were resolving to sell their lives dearly, the attacking party were searching the lower canyon and gully for the bodies of the slain.

The dawn came glimmering slowly into the canyon as Maguire, with quick eye, caught the first bushy head bobbing around the bend. ‘There’s no use to fire till they find us,’ he growled, ‘and every minute we hold off betters

the chances of someone coming along the road. If it was only two or three travellers we could then stand them off. Tom, not a shot from you, unless they rush,' hoarsely whispered Maguire.

'They're acting mighty funny,' muttered Doolan, with a groan. His thigh was stiffening, and the irritation of fever burned in his fingers twitching the triggers of the two big army revolvers.

It was still so dusky that the two men could only see the three Indians picking up the trail bit by bit.

Suddenly, with a shout, the three rushed directly up to the bank toward where the sole proprietors of the Whisky Express grimly awaited them. Well the two men cooped up there knew the stocky naked forms, the girdle and breech-clout, the raw-hide sandals, the quivers of short arrows and the hastily-scraped Apache bow. There was a revolver and knife at each brute's belt, but they staggered along with their guns at a ready.

As yet they saw nothing, but when two of

them came in line, by a mere chance, then Maguire, at ten feet distance, sent an ounce bullet ploughing through them both. The other buck turned, with a yell, but Maguire had snatched the second gun and killed him before he reached the road.

‘Patsy,’ whispered Doolan, the reserve, ‘we’ve a chance left. These fellows were all drunk! If the others—’

‘Remember!’ yelled Maguire, his fighting blood up, ‘hold your pistols to the last!’ A knot of a dozen dusky forms dashed around the corner of the bluffs sixty yards away, and, firing wildly, made directly for the spot where the bodies of the three braves lay.

Rifleman Maguire had been trained to fire ten shots a minute from his Springfield, and so he worked in seven discharges, dropping five men before three of the rum-infuriated warriors crowned the little stony knoll, only to meet the fusillade of Doolan’s heavy revolvers as an agonising surprise. One of the warriors dashed off the bluff into the creek gorge,

and three rolled and twisted away out of sight and fire, more or less crippled.

But seven bodies lay motionless in plain sight of the little breastwork.

The two men lay glaring out like wild beasts at bay as the merciless sun came up and its rays beat down into their little cavern. The effect of some random shots from the two angles of the bends of the road, the attempt to roll some heavy boulders down on them and crush them, and the menace of hideous yells ringing through the canyon, alone showed the presence of the red devils.

There was no sign of relief, and the excited Maguire began to lose all hope when Doolan became flighty under the influence of the heat and the pain of his wound. Several times the poor castaway had to drag his friend down behind the breastwork; and the idea of lashing his friend's arms began to dawn upon him.

'These devils will sober off soon!' gloomily cried Maguire. 'They'll wait till night and come on with a rush. Then it's all up with

poor Doolan—an' me! Well, I'll hold on to one of the revolvers. A couple of shots from it for poor Tom, and the last one—for me. I'll cheat them at the last!'

He considered the idea of lashing the half-frantic Doolan to his own body with Doolan's belt. 'I must keep a way to shoot,' he grimly decided, and he was relieved and yet astounded when Doolan's head sank back in a swoon of exhaustion.

'Poor old Tom! Ye'll never see Galway Bay again!' he growled, as the wounded man's limbs relaxed. He rolled him back and covered his face with a wet cloth. As he turned his head fearfully, he saw, to his horror, two or three bushy heads peeping up from each side of the approaches, as the remaining half-sobered Indians tried to crawl up into position. But the two guns handled alternately were too much. The soldier was fighting now for the honour of Galway and to save his friend from being scalped. There comes a time when desperation alone rules, and Maguire had reached the automatic point!

His ears had not noted the ringing answer of a cavalry bugle provoked by the last rapid fusillade as he was watching the crawling-up process.

‘Who is up there in the rocks?’ yelled Lieutenant Witherspoon, as a half-dozen of his men chased the last fleeing redskins around the bend.

‘A detachment of the Fourteenth Infantry, and the U.S. Mails!’ proudly cried Maguire, as he leaped down the shingle, when he saw the lead mules of a heavy train come wagging up the road.

‘Come up and help him out!’ begged Maguire.

Before Lieutenant Witherspoon’s convoy reached Camp M’Dowell the teamsters had counted the dead Apaches and the empty whisky bottles. The story was too good to keep. When Patsy Maguire apologised to the commander for ‘the mails arriving a little late,’ that officer kindly said, ‘Never mind, Sergeant Maguire, you are to have your chevrons for saving your friend’s life, but I will discontinue the Whisky Express!’

THE SECRET OF DOCTOR HARPER'S CABINET

THERE was no unhappier man in the beautiful Shenandoah Valley in the gloomy winter of 1860 than that universally beloved old gentleman, St George Beverley Harper, M.D. The election of Abraham Lincoln seemed to portend serious trouble for the beloved Old Dominion.

There was no physician as well known in Frederick, Clarke and Loudoun counties as the rigid practitioner of the old school of medicine, the duello and Arabian hospitality. By means of his well-known travelling carriage and his span of blacks, guided by old Pompey, Doctor Harper distributed calomel, jalap and laudanum with a liberal hand over a vast border area of Maryland and Virginia. His life had rippled on serenely at Tusculum, his stately home near Winchester,

since he had retired from society upon the death of a beloved wife many years before. His professional presence had illustrated many of the high-toned affairs of honour in the good old fighting days, and at sixty-five the simple-hearted, fiery old patrician was still ready to flare up when the 'peculiar institution' or the 'sacred soil' was endangered.

'I can see trouble coming, my boy,' he would gloomily remark to his only relative, St George Harper Beverley, the prospective heir of Tusculum. This gallant young gentleman, after leaving the University of Virginia, was duly moved along into that gentlemanly preparation for public life—the law—and was already the ornamental capstone of the four hundred and eighty-two young lawyers of Charlestown. A daring rider to hounds, an excellent sportsman and the soul of manly honour, young Squire Beverley rallied his friends around the hospitable board of Tusculum and calmly awaited greatness to be thrust upon him.

Seated upon the broad porch of the old mansion house, young Beverley and his friends listened to the old doctor's forebodings, while they enjoyed their after-dinner cigars and proudly gazed upon the beautiful vistas of the Shenandoah, then 'fair as a garden of the Lord.'

'The brunt of it will fall upon you younger men,' sadly remarked the old doctor. 'I was out in Mexico, and my fighting days are over, but I am making preparations to meet the trouble. We are here on the border, and these clouds seem to lower over dear old Virginia.'

'The Yankees will never fight us; they will back down, as they always do, in Congress,' hotly urged young Persifer Drummond Rhett. He was a fiery young local aristocrat, whose personal knowledge of the detested Yankee was confined to an itinerant tin pedlar or a meek-eyed, thin-chested school teacher.

But the old man, seated by one of the six

great fluted Corinthian columns of the ancient manor house, gazed wistfully over his fair inheritance. It was a noble old place, with stately trees, fair meadows, gurgling brooks and rich, fruitful fields. A hundred negroes were cosily domiciled upon the broad lands of Tusculum, and much was done and undone there in the loose, easy way of the fine old Virginia gentleman, all of the olden time!

‘I am not so sure, Persifer, my boy,’ kindly said the venerable host. ‘The power of the North, if exerted, will be a mighty one. We always undervalue our opponents in the struggles of life. I saw the New York Regiment go up the hill at Chepultepec with as game a rush as the Palmettoes. In money and resources they are far beyond us.’ Doctor Harper’s mind went back to the days when his rosy, clear-eyed Virginia wife swept along the piazzas of the great Saratoga hotels like an escaped goddess, a memory of the days of Grecian

beauty. He had spent his mornings around the springs, his Panama hat lying on his knees, and enjoying a rare Cuban cigar, while the 'solid men' of the great summer resort gravely consulted 'upon the state of the Union.' And, a travelled man, the doctor knew the preponderating strength of the great North, East and West. 'It will be a sad business, gentlemen, if we come to a trial by force. Our beloved Southland has high blood, brave men to muster in and the courage of our convictions. We are weak in monetary resources, railroads and the manufacturing element. Of course our people, and even our blacks, are to be relied on, but I fear for the final result if the war is a long one.'

'Ah!' cried Beverley, 'we will carry the war over the borders with a rush and dictate terms at Boston, Philadelphia and New York!'

'It may be! It may be so!' the old gentleman said, as he wandered away to

his library and the consideration of his own preparations, leaving the young men demolishing the illogical public positions of the Yankee statesmen.

An excitable state of feeling soon pervaded the whole valley of Virginia, and as the spring days came on, the inauguration of Lincoln, the frantic wave of enthusiasm rolling up from the gulf and the necessity for the 'Mother of Presidents' taking sides, brought about Virginia's secession on April 18th, and the immediate seizure of the Harper's Ferry Arsenal and the Norfolk Navy Yard.

The land was ablaze, north and south, and there was quite a bevy of bright-eyed Virginia girls clustered around the white columns of Tusculum when Captain St George Harper Beverley rode back from the successful descent upon Harper's Ferry.

He was a young fellow of handsome and athletic proportions, sinewy, well knit and yet not a giant in stature, and therefore he

had pounced upon the very tallest horse available, the longest black feather and one of the antique four and a half foot sabres once made by a liberal ordnance officer for the old First Dragoons.

These fearful blades were, in reality, approximating five feet, and their weight and clumsiness made it possible for even the simplest Yankee to scramble away out of reach. They had a curve of diabolic uselessness, moreover. But all looked fair in the future of the budding Confederacy. It was 'chock full of fight,' and the never-to-be-replaced flower of the South was being hastened forward to the Potomac and the Ohio.

It was natural that Beverley should join Turner Ashby's splendid riders, and he was quite the hero of the hour when the spirited beauties decorated him with red, white and red rosettes, sword-knot and all manner of military coquettish adornments.

And then lightly the gallant young hearts

went forth to battle for States' Rights and old Virginia. With fond affection the brave girls 'bound their warrior's sash,' but sad and gloomy years were stretched out before them, hidden behind the pall of Bull Run's battle smoke.

The old master of Tusculum had not urged on immediate secession; his silver hairs were seen in the Convention voicing the noble words of John Bell, Crittenden, and other moderate patriots. But all in vain; and after the bevy of young people had departed to other homes to speed other departing warriors, the doctor and his nephew dined sadly alone.

At daybreak the young captain was to ride away to Manassas, and his preparations were now all concluded. 'Hank' and 'Rube,' two of the likeliest negro boys, were to be his henchmen, the one to act as military valet, the other to take care of the two blooded chargers. The two men had wandered up to a knoll from which the

whole beautiful Potomac region could be descried.

It was glowing in its loveliness, and not a blood stain smeared God's tender, budding grass.

The 'Old Dominion' was ablaze now! No one knew of the horrors and devastation to come. In vain young Beverley urged that the Southern army would keep the Yankees north of the Potomac. 'My boy,' sadly said the doctor, 'it is a sluggish giant that Northern people, but they are making vast preparations. I fear that the torrent of war will burst soon upon our peaceful homes.'

When all was done that night, and Beverley had received every instruction from the old surgeon as to health, possible wounds and a hundred details, the old man laid his hand in blessing upon the young knight.

'I am sorry that I am not a richer man, my boy,' the veteran kindly said. 'Here is five hundred dollars in gold. Treasure it.

Our troops will soon be poorly provided—poorly paid.

‘I have left the old place to you; the coloured people go with it. Heaven knows what their fate will be in this war—which I see now will be long and bloody. I could not realise any money for you save by selling the dear old place or a large portion of the slaves. Either act would be a practical treason to our community now. But I have made some provision for you, in so far as I could, and Doctor Hall, our dear old pastor, will know of it. I have hardly decided upon the last steps. If you are spared to come back to me, if I am here to meet you, I will act myself; and if I am called away, he and his wife alone will know what I have done for you.’

There were grateful tears in the young man's eyes as he said ‘Good-night,’ and long after he had sought his room, he could hear the old doctor pacing his own apartment wrapped in gloomy forebodings.

When the gallant young captain galloped away the next morning, he paused a half-mile away to snatch a last fond look at the antiquated glories of dear old Tusculum.

None of us is a prophet in his own time, and few dreams seem wilder than that in the next two years a grave, careless-looking, obscure professor of mathematics at the Virginia Military Institute would make the name of 'Stonewall Jackson' deathless for all time; that the campaigns of the Shenandoah would bring out of the dreamy man the iron valour of a Ney, the headlong gallantry of a Lannes, and the irresistibility of a Wellington. But it was written in the stars! The lonely region seemed to be framed to illustrate that marvellous military career of two years, which caused the great Lee to despairingly cry, after the gloriously fatal day of Chancellorsville, 'He is better off than I am. He lost his left arm. I have lost my right!' The whole region which the old doctor had ridden over

seemed to be only a death trap for the Federal armies, and the death of Stonewall Jackson, and the coming of that grim swordsman, Philip Sheridan, alone turned the tide of defeat.

The red ploughshare of war was driven through the heart of the lovely Shenandoah at last, and Doctor Hall had preached the funeral sermon over the friend of his youth, long before Major Beverley, sick, wounded, sore at heart and penniless, was turned loose, a returned prisoner of war at the Potomac, to look at the ravages of Sheridan's cavalry.

For two years the veteran Confederate had received no news of his home, save the tidings of the death of the old doctor, who saw the last hopes of his fellow Confederates perish one by one.

Winchester was shot and shell torn. Its streets were garrisoned by Federal soldiers, and beyond a parole and a vast experience of gallant and hopeless fighting, St George Harper Beverley was absolutely without

belongings of any kind. He found a mass of straggling blacks hanging around the dear old town, where he was forgotten, and in whose halls the stern Provost-Marshal ruled gruffly. The war had been fought out at last. Virginia had been torn in two; and at thirty the Confederate veteran gazed, sick at heart, upon the ruin of his section, his state and his family fortunes.

A first pilgrimage to his uncle's tomb nerved him to depart, with the aid of a few straggling friends, finally met with, to revisit Tusculum, the home of his youth. Riding on a borrowed mule, he journeyed over the old roads once so familiar. The whole beautiful face of Nature had changed. Sheridan's wild troopers and the ebb and flow of armies had swept away houses, barns, bridges, fences, stock, crops and all that made the valley heritable.

The abandoned wrecks of military property alone marked the tide of Federal or Confederate disaster.

When at last St George Beverley crowned the well-remembered knoll he groaned in the anguish of a bitter heart. Only a heap of blackened ashes marked the site of the old mansionhouse. The woods had been swept away for picket fires, the gardens were uprooted, the offices levelled to the ground, the orchards and fields were bare and blasted.

Here and there a tottering chimney told of the red hoof of war which had ploughed with fire this once smiling paradise!

‘Why, in God’s name, did I not stop a Federal bullet that bit deep enough?’ the penniless major groaned, and his hand fell on the butt of a revolver which had been his only trophy of victory.

‘*No; not by my own hand!*’ he cried, as his eyes rested upon a few white stones marking the family cemetery.

They had spared his mother’s grave, and there he found the blessed relief of tears. He prayed beside that grave, and dedicated himself to a new life.

There was nothing to linger for. The negro quarters had all vanished. There was no stock, only a few wandering razor-backs. The blacks had evidently been impressed or swept away to join the great helpless mass then cowering around Georgetown, 'in the full enjoyment of the blessings of liberty.'

On his way back to Winchester he tossed up a copper cent, one of his boyish luck-pieces. He had a distant connection at Hagerstown who had already offered a temporary refuge.

'Heads, I go out to the Pacific Coast! Tails, I stay and try and work into the Baltimore Bar! This is a dead land, a shrine of battle memories; and twenty-five years must pass before it can begin to recover.'

He duly returned his borrowed mule and sought out the old pastor at Winchester. Perhaps there was some little thing left hidden away—the trust which his uncle had

hinted at. Alas! Doctor Hall was dead, and Mrs Hall had sought a refuge with some family friends in Kentucky or Tennessee. And so, girding up his loins, he crossed the Potomac to begin life anew at Hagerstown.

It was three years later, when the winning of a celebrated case sent the rising lawyer's name over the border states with the most friendly encomiums upon his talents and record. A nomination for Congress followed, and in the press of the political fight Major Beverley was astounded to receive a letter from Cynthiana, Kentucky, signed by the pastor's widow. It transmitted a letter from his dead uncle, with a drawing of the secret drawers of a famous old cabinet which had been the pride of Tusculum. The words of the dead man stirred up strange memories of that last night. 'There is a treasure hidden in the cabinet for you, my boy. I have concealed it, knowing that if you survive the war it will be only to meet poverty and hardship on your upward way in life.'

In the few words the budding Congressman recognised the paternal tenderness of his dear old clansman.

How well he remembered that old mahogany cabinet—a piece of ponderous joiner work. Three great drawers below, a desk-lid dropping down, counterpoised by huge concealed interior weights, a wonderful nesting of drawers, and an inner mirror, with one large drawer at the top, in the rear of which the secret compartments were ingeniously masked. A huge mahogany slab, split and turned sideways, displayed on this swinging door the most magnificent tracery of grain, and the dark red polish of a hundred years made the old cabinet a thing of beauty. Its gilt-bronze hatchings and scutcheons were worked with the Beverley arms.

Major Beverley had, in some loose fashion, set up a suzerainty over the place where Tusculum had once opened its hospitable doors. A few of the negroes had wandered back, and were half starving along there

'on shares.' The history of the sad past had been picked up bit by bit. Tusculum had been used as quarters by a dozen leading generals on each side. It had later been turned into a hospital, and finally burned down as the result of military vandalism, its imposing front inviting such retribution in the bitter days of the Early and Sheridan campaigns. But the silver, the portraits, the valuable furniture, the library—all the treasure had been gradually looted one by one. The floors were ripped up in search of hidden treasure. Major Beverley was a Congressman before he had succeeded in tracing the vanishing movements of the well-remembered cabinet. After the hospital use of the old house had ruined it for residence, Tusculum was used as a forage depot for a season—preparatory to its holocaust.

An old family negro was unearthed, who told the tale of a Yankee quartermaster, who packed up the cabinet and had it moved Potomacward. Much futile correspondence

with the pastor's wife, and considerable trouble, ended in a final abandonment of the search.

But there are strange turns of Fortune's wheels, even in the histories of inanimate as well as animate cabinets. One of the first civic honours bestowed upon Congressman Beverley was the invitation to make an address at the dedication of the Confederate Military Cemetery at Hagerstown.

For loving hands had gathered up the remains of the brave Southrons who died at Sharpsburg, at South Mountain, Boonsboro' and Keedysville, as well as Falling Waters.

A dinner was given to several of the visiting dignitaries at the nearest mansion house to the now consecrated grounds.

Major Beverley was enjoying his after-dinner cigar with his host, when the ceremonial festivities were over, and the two 'talked war a bit,' as was the fashion of those days. For now a generation has arisen which knows not Joseph! The old

soldier is relegated to obscurity, and the oceans of costly blood shed in a vain struggle to settle the unsettled enigma of the blacks seem to have been forgotten, save in family tradition.

Suddenly Beverley walked up to a cabinet, which was one of the *pièces de resistance* of the library. It needed but a glance to tell him that the lost was found.

‘Pray, tell me, Colonel Houghton, where you obtained this beautiful old piece of furniture,’ said the Congressman, with a thrill of loving awakening memories.

‘That,’ laughed his host, ‘is about the only thing I made as a clear profit by the war!’

‘Some of M‘Clellan’s excellent artillerists shelled my old home into flames, and the Federal soldiers swept over my farm like the proverbial Tartar, whose horse’s hoof marks a period to all future fertility. I was skinned alive!’ The Marylander ‘sighed his reminiscences.’ ‘But this beautiful old

cabinet was brought out of the Shenandoah Valley by a good-natured Yankee quartermaster, who told me he found it in an old mansion where every other portable thing had been carried off. Some marauders burned the old place afterward, and as he was depot quartermaster at Hagerstown for a long while we exchanged some civilities. He gave it to me, as it was far too massive to send North, and really begged me to try and find an owner. You see there's a coat of arms on the hatchings.'

'So there is, colonel—mine!' quietly said Major Beverley, handing his host his seal ring.

That night, when the guests had departed, the two Southern friends, aided by the drawing, succeeded in opening the long-hidden secret drawer, four feet long and about six inches wide.

The sum of five thousand dollars in gold five-dollar pieces was found secreted care-

fully there, the coins being wrapped in rouleaux and the packages padded to prevent a jingling noise.

There was also an envelope, with a deposit receipt of Coutts & Child's Bank, London, for two thousand pounds in gold to the joint and several order of the uncle and nephew, and the deeds to several hundred acres of coal lands in Kentucky, which had been a notable family investment. A will bequeathing the whole to St George Harper Beverley was the last article concealed in the drawer.

'I trust that the old home will be spared, and that I may live to see you return in honour!' so ran the last letter of the keen-sighted old doctor. 'If Doctor Hall sees fit he may remove and conceal these matters in a safer place, but I trust that my age and non-combatant character will serve to save dear old Tusculum from the torch. I have a fatal presentiment that the South will not win! Sheer exhaustion of material

resource and population will turn the scale against us in a long war. My only hope is in some brilliant Southern general conquering a piece by some great blow.'

The men turned their eyes away with bitter tears, for Stonewall Jackson's name came back like the mournful sigh of the wind through the pines. Had he lived to command the great charge at Gettysburg, a peace might have followed the success of that thunderbolt of war. But it was otherwise ordained. And, later, when Major Beverley sold the coal lands for a half a million dollars, a new mansion rose on the olden site, and a fair-faced Virginian wife often told her children the story of the secret of the old doctor's cabinet, which was 'home again!'

THE MYSTERY OF SERGEANT ARMAND CAIRE

THERE was no doubt that Sergeant Armand Caire of 'Ours' was a walking mystery, and a very handsome mystery, too. Seated in my quarters at our battalion headquarters at Rowell's Point, I often followed his alert soldierly figure, as with springing step he crossed the parade. 'Some mystery locked up under your shell jacket, my good-looking French friend,' I decided, 'and — a very well-guarded secret, too.'

Many a meditative pipe I smoked while idly watching the silver yacht sails flit by on the sound, or listening to the music floating over the tranquil waters from the great Fall River summer boats. I was young to the service myself, impulsive, generous and ardent at twenty-three. I had observed the many accomplishments of the Gallic stranger

who had worked himself up from recruit to first-class private, corporal and sergeant in two years.

In my cosy lieutenant's cottage I fain would have sent for Armand Caire and tendered him the use of my books, papers, and the little adjuncts which make garrison life pass lightly away. There was, however, a limit to polite intrusion, and the young Gaul knew how to hold his tongue. He was the very picture of a soldier. Thirty or thirty-three, brown, sinewy, of active and elegant figure, his moustache and imperial bespoke the professional French soldier. He was a correct and fluent English scholar, a fact which surprised me. A pair of steady, dark eyes, an olive cheek, a graceful oval face, and delicate hands and feet marked 'race,' as far as externals can be safely taken as guide.

Of course, in the sixteen or eighteen battalion officers there were experienced men of our special corps who had thrown away

much useless previous sympathy on men tied down in the ranks beneath their station in life. Several epaulette-bearers prophesied final disaster as the result of Armand Caire's rapid rise. There was only first sergeant and sergeant-major between him and perhaps a lieutenancy in a line regiment.

And yet there were obstacles. No one in the command was ignorant of his thorough mastery of men, drill and tactics. His military character was irreproachable. A delicate smoker, he avoided the sutler's store, and his leisure was passed in athletic recreation, in sketching or with his beloved violin. The elevation to a sergeancy had given him a room of his own, and a very handsome sketching case and violin were the only ornaments of his den. A few water colours and some exquisite professional projects took the place of the cheap battle scenes and glimpses of womanly beauty which our 'non-coms.' usually culled from the illustrated weeklies to adorn their rough dens.

On inspection tours I passed through Sergeant Caire's room with a mere perfunctory glance of approval. There was not a photograph, not a woman's face, nothing to indicate that he had any life outside of Upton or the Aide Mémoire.

One day he flushed as his eyes met mine, when my sword hilt displaced a dainty volume of De Musset's poems from his drawing desk. I picked it up hastily and could not avoid seeing the words, traced in a dainty hand, 'Marguerite to Armand.' There was a date—but—I had seen all too much!

And then Armand Caire's eyes met mine, with the glance half-pleading, half-defiant, which sealed the door of the tomb once more.

Our sergeants were mostly sturdy, well set up Germans, happy in receiving almost an officer's pay at home; some exceptionally fine Irish-Americans, and one or two practical Americans of real value, for in our corps every 'non-com.' and man was required to be an artificer of

some sort. And a better lot of men were never gathered together. The war was just over, and we had promoted up into our double allowance of sergeants and corporals many men who would have made good commissioned officers. In later years I have marked their general success in attaining permanent and good stations. Among these men Armand Caire was hardly popular. He was *bon camarade*, and yet—he was of another world! The army verdict upon ‘skeletons in the closet’ is usually a harsh one, and Sergeant Caire was supposed to be prudently silent for cause. And yet he never drifted into trouble, he joined no cabals, and was apparently as happy and prosperous as a man could be under the yellow chevrons of a sergeant.

No one had ever gained his confidence, and no one cared to press upon his polite reserve. He took but little leave of absence, and on occasion had been seen at the performances of the better French companies giving opera or drama in New York City.

The perfect performance of his duty and his equable character made him respected by the men, the officers learned to depend upon him, and only among the ladies of the post was he a standing object of wonderment. His taste in decoration, his wonderful arts in improving some pleasure grounds, his ready resource on all occasions, proved him to be a master of many branches of technique.

All the officers of our corps were above pumping or following the man up, and but one singularity of demeanour was noticed. He always went over to the little village post office, a mile and a half away, and posted his own letters himself. It was impossible for him to prevent his mail being received 'through the usual channels,' which meant in the army the battalion quartermaster.

After one of our summer hops a chorus of ladies took up the fascinating subject of the mystery of Sergeant Armand Caire.

'There's one thing I do like about him,' said a very distinguished veteran officer. 'He

strictly minds his own business. Nearly all the "distinguished foreigners" whom I have met with in our service are veiled scamps. They usually are pleasant bootlicks, and obsequiously creep upon the notice of officers and their families. This man is a thoroughbred in his behaviour. He certainly deserves promotion in time; and yet there is always the real element of "character." I have in fifteen years of army life been several times fascinated with supposed "broken down" European gentlemen—grafs, barons, chevaliers, and counts—"younger sons" decidedly gone wrong. As a rule, they "work the sympathy act," and either make a snug nest by base arts, or, when trusted, decamp with the post funds or play some low prank. The only real "lord" I ever discovered was a rattling good fellow at heart, and a farrier in a Western cavalry regiment. When "discovered" he flatly declined "fatted calf," and went on gaily hammering on horse and mule shoes until really plucked away by the British Minister.

‘He was a jovial youth of a very fresh complexion, simple ways, a good soldier, a mighty drinker, and he always said that the “Texas bronchos” were “no end of a lark!” None of them could ever kick his Farrier Lordship loose! But, bless you, he didn’t want promotion, and he guyed his own officers!’

The usual number of croakers went on predicting that in due time Sergeant Armand Caire would ‘make a break,’ but he never did. And when one-fifth of our force was suddenly ordered to California to garrison a wild, wind-swept island in San Francisco Bay, thither went the refined stranger as second sergeant of ‘K’ Coy. On the voyage out, in the ante-railroad days, his demeanour was perfect. We had taken in some new men to fill up the roster, as second-class privates, and among them a few graceless souls who only joined the command of about two hundred, to get a comfortable steamer passage to California, and then abscond in that Golden Land.

The relaxation of discipline due to a crowded

steamer, the tropical heat of the Caribbean, the opportunities of the Panama transit, caused a few frays and disorders among the more turbulent of these few undesirable men.

In one of these *émeutes*, before we had the men fairly in hand on the old *Colorado*, Sergeant Caire was obliged to severely punish one of the new recruits named Sneath, a sneaking, smart, sea-lawyer sort of a fellow, whose mean ways and cunning arts led him later into various secret delinquences. The handsome Frenchman's violin was greatly in demand as we glided along the purpled Mexican coast, and, one evening, after the impromptu concert was over, a quartermaster of the steamboat took the sergeant aside. 'There's one of your fellows, that one—' and the son of Neptune pointed out Sneath—'has sworn the most awful oaths to get even with you. Look out for a knife in your ribs some dark night. Watch that fellow; he means mischief, and he is a dangerous dog!'

The cool Frenchman thanked his nautical

mentor. 'I will watch him. I fancy, however, that he will turn up missing some day, out there, when we take post. He does not look as if he would dare to hurt anyone! But I'm obliged to you all the same!'

To the surprise of the command, Sneath, upon our arrival at our island home, showed no disposition to clear out. Within a month he had got into 'daily duty, postal clerk, company clerk work, and quartermaster's papers,' as a relief from the soldierly duties of standing guard, and the artificers' work of aiding to build that pretty post where I spent the three happiest years of my life.

We soon lost a few men, whom we were really glad to drop from the roster, for good new men were available, drawn to us by our higher pay, quicker promotion, and double allowance of sergeants and corporals. I had been 'officer of the day' when Sneath was punished, and I noted the relentless glare of the eyes he turned upon the disciplinary

sergeant. So, feeling that black blood existed between the men, I narrowly watched Sneath's rapid rise at the new post to a sort of general utility man. He was a remarkable penman, quick and accurate at accounts, and soon drifted into a snug clerical berth, with considerable perquisites, and one which only called on him to carry a gun once in every two months at muster. I noted with satisfaction that this separated Sergeant Caire and his avowed enemy, for the steamer quartermaster had also warned me against some attempt at crime.

'If it's ever anything, it will be a knife stab in the dark,' I muttered, having several times caught Sneath's mean, yellow eyes following the sergeant around. In fact, I bade Caire keep his door locked at night, as the separate sergeants' rooms in the new barracks enabled him to do.

But a strange change in the demeanour of Armand Caire soon became to me a matter of grave concern. As the beautiful

new garrison neared completion, the alert French soldier seemed to lose both heart and self-control. His eyes became haggard, his very habits altered, and when not on duty I often observed him pacing the sandy shores of the lonely island like a restless wolf.

There was no hidden dissipation, there was no apparent bodily lesion. But the lines of his face were grave and stern, and he moved about his duties as one under a sentence of death. When the non-commissioned staff reported to me that the sergeant's barrack demeanour was that of an utter hopeless listlessness, I forced my nearest friend, our post surgeon, to send for Caire and carefully examine him.

‘It beats me!’ exclaimed my house mate, the bothered son of Esculapius. ‘Six months ago, at fencing drill, as general instructor, I thought I never had seen a more soldierly figure. Something, it seems, has gone out of the man's life, never to return. If he

would only talk,' sadly concluded Dr Welcker. 'But he has the same right to his mental privacy as the commander-in-chief. I give it up, but I will have Halton, our English hospital steward, keep a good eye on him. They are great cronies, for Halton was in a medical school in Paris.'

Circumstances made me post commander for a period of five or six weeks in the early spring after our arrival, for the four senior officers and the surgeon went away on a tour to the Yosemite Valley.

'Can I do anything for you, lieutenant?' said the brevet-colonel in command, as I was left with only my ten sergeants, ten corporals, and one hundred and fifty men to associate with. True, there was the hospital steward, but I must look to civilian visitors for my mind brightening, as my golden epaulettes barred me from any close association with my command.

'Yes, colonel!' I cried. 'Take poor Sergeant Caire along with you. He will make

you some exquisite sketches, and be of use to you. You have two or three enlisted men to look after. He will keep them straight.'

'By Jove! That's a good idea! He has been moping, and the man has earned a bit of diversion. His work on our model battery has been faultless.'

A half an hour later, I saw Sergeant Caire walk away from my commander's quarters.

'Strange fellow that,' said the colonel. 'Proud as a king—thanked me—declined the billet, and said he was expecting some important communications soon. By the way, you can give him ten days' leave of absence while I am away. If you can get him over to San Francisco, perhaps even a few wholesome infractions of duty, a bit of a "blow out," may wake him up. The man's simply hipped and melancholy'

I lost no time, after I became the autocrat of the island, in sending for the 'Silent Sergeant,' as he was now termed. It was strange how embarrassed I felt in deliberately

trying to peep behind the scenes of his hidden life. 'Thank you, lieutenant,' he said, 'I prefer not to leave the island.' He saluted, and then stood awaiting his dismissal, with the air of a man who knows his personal rights.

I sighed that I could not enforce my ideas of letting some sunlight in upon his darkened soul, but in our Republican land the difference between officer and soldier is a vast one. Even in autocratic Russia, haughty Prussia, or mediæval Austria, the gulf is not wider. Our regulations seem to have been guided by the old English 'Mutiny Act,' and the absurd caste and fantastic notions in vogue when our military laws were copied from the old English purchase system rules. I tried to throw some brotherly kindness into my voice.

'I am afraid, Sergeant Caire, you miss the *bonhomie* of the French service. There are so many gentlemen'—I emphasised the word—'who think they can speedily rise to

a commission here, by enlisting and then working their way up. We are "*plus aristocrates que les vrais aristocrates.*" And yet, in an infantry or cavalry regiment, you might rise in a few years. Have you no friends in the country?' The man was ten years my senior, and he could see my boyish kindness struggling for utterance.

'Not a friend in the world—but—you, mon lieutenant!'

He smiled sadly as I blurted out, 'If you would only tell me—I see that you are unhappy—I might help you.'

'Ah! monsieur,' he softly said, 'some sorrows lie too deep for words. I have no future—the past is voiceless—now. Pray excuse me. I shall never forget your kindness. I have been a gentleman—I don't deny it.'

It was in my private room that our hands met, as I impulsively cried, 'And—you will be one always! If you feel the need of a friend, come to me, send for me to your

room at barracks, and I will do what I can.'

'I shall never forget your noble words,' he said. 'If I ever cross the line, it will only be to confide in you. And the reason why I sought your corps for service was the officers are all men of distinction, and I have been treated like a man.'

He was gone after I had vainly pleaded again to induce him to take the ten days' leave and have a little run.

Four weeks from that day I walked down the parade to make a critical inspection of the double company anent the return of the chief. A wild, unnerving California wind was whistling over the island. It was one of the days when men's minds and tempers go strangely awry.

To my astonishment, Sergeant Armand Caire was reported absent. It was the first offence ever marked up of the kind. Turning to a file closer, I ordered him to step over to the barracks and turn out the

delinquent. 'I've tried his room, sir,' reported the first sergeant. 'Both doors are tightly locked.'

With a sudden misgiving I left the company at parade rest, and, beckoning to the first sergeant, entered the narrow hallway leading to the two sergeants' rooms facing each other.

Rapping smartly on his door with the pommel of my drawn sword, I sharply cried, 'Sergeant Caire!'

There was a clear response '*Here!*' and then rang out a deafening report. The first sergeant and I leaped at the door with a common impulse of shoulders. It gave way with a crash.

There, on the bed, dressed in his full uniform, lay the soldier who had answered '*Here!*' for the last time on earth.

He was dead, and upon the table lay a package marked with my name. 'Suicide!' cried the startled orderly sergeant.

I sent the sergeant on the run to send

me the hospital steward and the post guard with a stretcher.

‘I’ve been afraid of this for some time, sir,’ said Halton, as he dropped the nerveless arm. ‘Poor Armand! He is gone. Time expired—now.’ With a desire to trace the mysterious cause, I sent the sergeant to inspect and dismiss the company. Halton and I made a thorough private search of the room. There was nothing save the fragments of a tattered letter on which I could trace the word ‘Marguerite.’

Under my own eyes, the dead soldier’s belongings were sealed up and deposited in a doubly-locked vacant room in my own quarters to await the commander’s return. I decided not to open the package addressed to me until then, from motives of official delicacy

As became my duty, two days later we buried the unhappy man, with full martial honours, upon the bleak hillside of the storm-lashed north side of the island, and a fresh

red mound met the eyes of my astonished chief on his return.

I reported all but one little incident, the last being, that when the company broke ranks after the soldiers' volleys three had been fired for the poor French exile, Sneath had mockingly cried, 'And so—good-bye—for good—Mr Johnny Crapaud,' for which brutality, Sergeant Dennis O'Brien, a warm-hearted Celt, promptly administered a wholesome beating, which was passed over by the commanding officer, viz., myself.

When the chief returned, I begged the instructions of that delicate-minded gentleman as to Sergeant Armand Caire's still unopened packet. 'It was his own choice that you—and no one else—should receive that packet. I have no instructions to give you. Use your honour as an officer, and your sense of gentlemanly obligation. If there is aught you should report to me, you know your duty.'

I unfastened the sealed parcel with trembling fingers in my own room. As I fancied, it was the little copy of De Musset's poems. There was an envelope in which he had traced these lines,—

‘I wished you to have the little book. I thought of your kindness—even at the last. If you ever go to Europe, see these two ladies. Alas! they have both forgotten poor Armand. If you can communicate with them, do so. I have failed to receive any replies to my letters for nearly a year.’

On one of the cards was pencilled the words, ‘My sister;’ And the other bore the name of the Countess De Couci, an *élégante* of the best Parisian circles.

A month later my official duties were to auction off the sketch case and violin of the dead gentleman, as by due operation of law. I had decided to have the violin bid in for our commander as a personal relic, but when the yellow-eyed Sneath bid

forty dollars for the sketching case, I firmly met his cowardly eye. After a snappy conflict I obtained it at ninety. And the neat stone and substantial fence around the poor fellow's grave were thus provided for.

I passed long nights wondering why Sneath should have come to the front for the possession of the case, in which I found not a single paper. It was a beautiful Winsor & Newton artists' case of the very best quality. I was puzzled, but an ugly feeling took possession of me when I later received from Paris two heart-broken letters. The sister of my dead friend boldly charged that her brother's letters had been stolen for several months. There were several five-hundred-franc *billets de banque* in them. And the sweet-faced Countess de Couci, before the roses had bloomed twice upon his grave, had told me all the sad story of Captain Armand de Gainville, of the *État Major* of one of the French divisions in Algeria. An unfortunate duel of honour, in which a socially powerful

antagonist had been slain, caused him to flee to America.

‘We were sure of his pardon from our gracious *Impératrice*, but he had madly enlisted in your service, and so was tied down for five years. We feared to bring about his punishment by taking steps for his public discharge—and his enemies must have found him out. I always wrote to him twice a month. We were preparing to visit California *incognito*, for his heart-rending letters sometimes reached us. Who was his enemy? May God reward him for breaking two loving women’s hearts. Armand was to have been my husband!’

I dared not indulge my suspicions, and I dared not tell them that he had died a suicide. The work of the scoundrel who drove Sergeant Armand Caire to madness had been but too well done.

Five years later, on the eve of a departure to Europe, I was hurriedly summoned to a city hospital to see a poor wretch who had

been crushed by some falling timbers. It was Sneath, the discharged soldier. The moment when he saw me he covered his face and groaned, 'It's all up with me now! I may as well tell you all! I robbed Sergeant Caire's letters to get even. I was in the quartermaster's office. I handled the mail; I stole his outgoing letters too, and I got eight hundred dollars out of the French letters. But his face always haunted me.' He whispered to me where he had hidden them. 'Let the women have the letters he wrote. God may have mercy on me now!' With a low groan his spirit passed, and the mystery of Sergeant Armand Caire was at an end. I saw the two loving women later, happy even in their sorrow when I gave them the last words of their loved one.

HOW WE COURT-MARTIALLED SERGEANT MALONEY

It is nearly thirty years since the fate of Sergeant Michael Maloney, the ranking duty sergeant of 'K' company of the battalion of regulars to which I was attached, trembled in the balance before a stern garrison court-martial. I unloose the gates of memory and, forgetting my silvered hair and wrinkled brow, see myself once more the slim lieutenant, bending under the august honours of recorder of that memorable tribunal.

It was upon a distant and lonely shore, far from the grey-castled fortress of West Point, where we assembled to try the 'malignant'; in fact, a few miles further west would have plumped our double company out into the blue Pacific Ocean. From our sterile island in the harbour of San Francisco we could gaze out through the Golden Gate and mark

the happy ships 'whose course had run from lands of snows to lands of sun.' The storm flag upon old Fort Point, streaming out in defiance of all the world and his brother, cheered me by day. I was 'blushing under budding honours,' in those fall days of 'sixty-eight,' and while by day the golden sheen of my staff epaulettes and the martial clank of my sword reminded me that I was no longer a book-devouring cadet, the dragging over that rocky isle, inspecting sentinels on post in the midnight hours, through sleet and storm, was a gentle prelude to other *désagréments* of the service. But I owed a great debt to Uncle Sam for nurture and education, and, in my poor way, I was then beginning to pay it off by instalments, which have since stretched out to ten long years, in various duties and changing stations, military and civil.

The junior of four commissioned officers attached to the double company, my modest rank gave me the exclusive privilege of

being recorder of this memorable court, and copying neatly interminable folios of 'proceedings' from my own notes, laboriously pencilled in the court. I had a monopoly of the work, the brevet-colonel and post commander wore the 'brow of Jove,' and my two first lieutenants evidently enjoyed the studious second lieutenant's labours, while they whiled away their leisure in sketching the 'trembling malefactors' and the 'indefatigable recorder.' I drew a 'full hand' at duty when I reported on that island, 'fresh from the academy.' Post adjutant, post treasurer, drill master, officer of the day, and a few more 'functions,' made me believe that 'life was earnest, life was real,' 'when I first put the uniform on!'

A multiplicity of little odds and ends fell to my share, and my first 'court-martial' is recalled to-day by a memory of the pride with which I donned the golden epaulettes and cocked hat, with strict full dress, for the first time on duty. The fact that I had

sported my entire regalia, less sword and spurs, at the swellest ball of the season in San Francisco, did not count. I was only called to that 'pahty' to exhibit the perfections in the dance of some of 'California's fairest daughters'; but when we court-martialled Sergeant Michael Maloney I was 'on duty,' and I deeply regretted, being a 'mounted officer,' that I had no charger to ride the three hundred yards from 'Officers' Row' to the barrack room hall, where poor Maloney writhed under my accusing eye as I read the charges and specifications against him in an appropriately hollow voice.

Courts-martial are very solemn tribunals. The memories of the quick despatch of the high-souled Nathan Hale, the stern adjudication of the fate of the gallant and unfortunate Andre, the 'maimed rites' of the council condemning the chivalric Duc d'Enghien, the mutiny of the *Nore*, and the awful tragedy of the brig *Somers*, may recur to some of my readers. The doom adjudged

by these stern tribunals is apt to be as merciless as the swing of the scimitar of a Bashi-Bazouk, and I have always greatly respected the acumen of Monsieur le Marechal Bazaine in slipping away at night and reaching Spain safely before the military executioners of France reached out for him to execute an *ex post facto* sentence of death.

I was fresh from the extremely entertaining lectures of Professor French and Major-General Alexander S. Webb at West Point when we court-martialed the unfortunate Maloney. Not only the lectures of these great expounders of military law were fresh in my ardent mind, but much lore extracted from Halleck, Kent, De Hart, Benet and many others now, by me, forgotten 'authorities.' I had listened with awe for four long years to the reading of the 'Articles of War,' and I had observed with pain that there were just ninety-nine of them, and that many of them ominously ended 'to be shot to death

with musketry.' 'That's a very neat way of putting it, Savage,' had remarked laughing Benny Hodgson to me on one occasion at West Point, when a local excitement in the corps of cadets had caused Colonel Henry W Black, U.S. Army, 'to favour us with his company at dinner,' for the purpose of reading, in a rich, rolling voice, those same very ably drawn articles. When Colonel Black prepared to lead away his half-dozen staff officers and leave us to our interrupted meal, he briskly turned around to deliver a last word of cheer. 'You have heard the articles, young gentlemen. They will be strictly carried out to the letter if there is any more trouble!' I pause here to say that 'there was no more trouble;' but laughing Benny retorted, *sotto voce*, 'It seems if the enemy don't shoot us our friends will!'

Poor Benny Hodgson! It was only eight years after that remark when he was obligingly 'shot to death with musketry' by the grim

Sioux warriors on the Rosebud, as he bravely held the ford in front of Reno's Hill, at the Little Big Horn, laying down his life in its youthful flower to save the wounded of his command from the scalping-knife. The Seventh Cavalry lost its brightest face when Benny died.

And so, with a knowledge of the gravity of military law, I was in a serious mood when I took my seat at the recorder's table to administer this *lex talionis* in the case of the recusant Sergeant Michael Maloney, 'and such other prisoners as might be properly brought before the court.' The company clerk had arranged all in due order in the 'fair chamber looking east.' There was store of foolscap paper and lakelets of ink. Books, authorities and Army Regulations were there to serve as 'lamps to my feet.' I do not yet know who added *Charles O'Malley, Laus Veneris*, by Algernon Charles Swinburne, *The Nautical Ephemeris* and the *San Francisco City Directory* to my official books, but a beauti-

ful *Treatise Upon the Resection of the Hip Joint* (with plates) led me to believe that the post surgeon kindly wished to help me out.

I was 'helped out' for a year or more in many ways on joining my command by those 'seniors,' who seem to delight 'to make things pleasant for a young graduate.' If they did not always succeed, they tried to, and—so we will let it go at that.

At parade, the evening before, I had read the solemn order of the post commander convening the court, and every man jack of the four platoons quivered visibly at my impressive manner of rendering the will of our 'war lord!' He was only a brevet-colonel, but he ranked us all out of sight, and, as post commander, we were the 'sheep of his pasture,' and, as far as peace of mind goes, he held us 'in the hollow of his hand.' No civilian can understand the dread black shadow of the commander's displeasure hanging over the unfortunate officer or soldier. There are a 'thousand and one' delightful 'Arabian

nights' and days of torture which a commander can inflict; and, even now as I write, I recall the widespread pleasure in a 'gallant regiment' of our army to see its commander go up to the well-merited stars. But, as he has made regimental life one glad, sweet song and dance for the whole period since the war, they rejoice as one man, and now feel that the 'weary are at rest!'

Denied the unfeigned pleasure of hearing Mr Gounod's very proper 'Marche Funebre' appropriately rendered 'by the band' over his cold *corpus*, the officers of this happy regiment can only remember that 'parting is such sweet sorrow,' and, with one voice, decide to omit the 'loving cup' presentation which seems to spread over our benighted land like the march of the Canada thistle, or the twin blessings of bloomers and bicycles.

In that light-hearted regiment to-day, many a man, in reading the order promoting their 'stern commander,' will realise the beauties of those last lines penned by Thackeray's

master hand, 'And my heart throbbed with an exquisite bliss!'

At the parade, when I thundered forth the bringing to the bar of the unlucky Maloney, every man of the command knew that the post commander 'had it in' for the sergeant. He was 'in close confinement' in his barrack room—only spared the disgrace of the guard-house; for the three yellow stripes of the sergeant's chevrons were still upon his manly arms. He could not be deprived of them without 'due course of law,' for he had a warrant, signed by our distinguished battalion commander, a major-general of the piping times when the Stars and Bars flew in defiance of the extremely energetic Mr Edwin M. Stanton, and greatly to that gentleman's daily annoyance. Though Michael Maloney, by a figment of the law, languished, like Eugene Aram, 'with gyves upon his wrists,' he was simply interned in barracks. He was not as sadly off as that pitiable creation of the great magician Kipling, the abject 'Danny Deever,' whose

uniform was torn off and buttons cut away. But the sorrowing son of Erin, Michael Maloney 'of Ours,' was in the toils for all that.

It's very well for Messrs Gilbert and Sullivan to airily remark, 'Never mind the why and wherefore.' The 'why and wherefore' threatened to reduce Michael Maloney to the ranks, to drop his pay from forty-three dollars a month to nothing—and to affix a ten-pound ball by a ten-foot chain to his robust Milesian leg.

The prospect of Maloney spending the rest of his enlistment in assisting the ingenious officers of the Corps of Engineers to transform Alcatraz Island into a gun platform was strictly in the line of his profession, but while they laboured with level and theodolite, he, as a military prisoner, if convicted, would operate a wheelbarrow, under the guard of a sentinel, and sleep in a cold cell, with forfeited pay, a dishonourable discharge, and meagre rations of truly Spartan simplicity.

In the evening, before Maloney's trial, the three juniors gathered in my quarters to discuss the forthcoming court proceedings. Three handsome double houses were the homes of five bachelor officers, the commandant dwelling in awful majesty alone in one of them. It was due to the presence of the surgeon, my house mate, that some 'facts as to Maloney' were judiciously sowed on fertile ground—cast, as it were, like bread upon the bitter waters of Marah then engulfing the luckless sergeant.

I can recall the winning face of our senior first, who was to be president of this garrison court. Poor Jack! The only human realisation of an Ouida hero whom I ever met! He had the talents—all the graces! 'Alcibiades' I fondly nicknamed him. Spirited, daring and graceful, he always affected the absence of heart, and yet, in a few brief years, he ran the race of life, and died untimely, leaving before him a half-finished written message to the woman whom he loved, the last thing he

saw in life. Not in battle or storm did he lay down his life of promise, and more than one heart was broken when Handsome Jack died alone.

The second member was a man with a heart of gold and of a taciturn demeanour, for the promise of his distinguished career was then hidden in his level head. I, as the junior, let my superiors go over the ground and kept silent.

There was no possible discussion as to the facts in the case of Sergeant Michael Maloney. When 'Buster' (our second) knocked out his pipe and strolled away to bed, he sadly said, 'I'm afraid poor Maloney is in for it!' And yet the senior, the surgeon and I lingered in a chat, artfully drawn out by the kind-hearted doctor, an Irishman himself.

It was the old, old story! There was no woman in the case, although the military Pandora afterward fumbled in her box and gave us a good-looking woman of humble

rank on that island, who kicked up as much rumpus as that classic member of the *haut canaille*—Helen of Troy!

Take the story of ‘honest Michael Cassio,’ and substitute ‘Mike Maloney’ for Othello’s ancient, and ‘the incident is closed,’ as the Frenchman aptly says.

A few days before the council Sergeant Maloney had departed on a three days’ pass for San Francisco, and he was then a miracle of military neatness. His well-brushed dark and light blue uniform, his gleaming shoulder scales—the pride of his heart—his yellow chevrons and blue service stripes, his artfully polished military platter-shaped shoes, his neat forage cap—all marked him as destined to play havoc with the susceptibilities of certain young ‘colleens’ in the city, whose hearts grew lighter when he came.

When he sailed away on the Government steamer *M'Pherson* he had a complacent smile on his face, and—alas!—a five-dollar bill in his pocket. I was officer of the day

I received his salute, examined his pass, and bade him (mentally) go forth to meet his Norah Creina in peace, for the paymaster had 'been around,' and Maloney was justly entitled to his three days off.

We had nourished high hopes of Michael! The orderly sergeant of the double company, Hand, was soon to be discharged. Nothing but the fact of Maloney being a bit shy on 'book learning' could prevent his promotion to the place of the retiring Hand, and adding a lozenge to his chevrons and five dollars a month to his pay. The whole effective control of the company would pass into Maloney's brawny hands, and he had well earned the distinction.

For, in the dark days from '61 to '65, Michael, a lad born of Irish parents in our 'regulars,' nurtured as a drummer boy, had cheerfully bitten cartridges and fired his old Harper's Ferry musket cheerfully in the face of almost anything visible. He remembered the flaming ridge of Gaines's Mills, the bloody

slopes of Malvern, the railroad cut at the second Bull Run, the peach orchard at Antietam, the bloody angle at Gettysburg, and he swore by M'Clellan, Fitz John Porter and General Sykes. Mike Maloney was game up to Appomatox, and the blowing to pieces of his comrades of Sykes' Regular Brigade had at last forced the honours of a sergeancy upon him.

I had seen him march up the hill at West Point when the depleted command came home from the war, with its ranks opened to show the vacant places of the lamented dead, and the band playing 'Ain't You Glad to Get Out of the Wilderness?'

Now, I had been officer of the day on Maloney's return, and I was astonished to see him debark in an unkempt condition and silently make his way back to the barracks. Turning and following his retreating steps, candour forces me to say that his unsteady legs described the grape-vine twist! I had passed the regrettable discovery over in

silence, and I tried not to notice the careless wagging of his curly pate, the vacant smile on his honest face, and the relaxed mouth, ordinarily snapped close in a Milesian triangle. He was 'all there,' but slightly scattered! There were a dozen other soldiers on the boat returning from pass—and some of them were habitual drinkers, but, strangely, none of them were 'leery' on this day.

It was at mess that evening, while we five officers were being neatly served with our cosy dinner, that the sounds of a couple of shots rang out on the evening air.

'That's for you, Mr Officer of the Day,' curtly said the colonel. Grasping my sword, and running over the parade, followed by a corporal's guard, I found that Sergeant Maloney was locked in his room. With a spring the corporal of the guard and myself went through the door. We were obliged to temporarily place the excited sergeant in the guard-house for safety.

It was the work of that universal devil—

the invisible spirit of wine! There was no excitement in the barracks, for a real discipline was always maintained; but, on my return to report the unhappy 'break' to the colonel, I found that Sergeant Hand had already reported to the commander that he had been fired upon twice from Maloney's window, although he saw no one. I was at once directed to return and secure the sergeant's gun. It was easy for me to see, a half-hour later, that some quick-witted friend had cooled the barrel and wiped the piece out in the interval since the shooting. A kindly master stroke of old soldier wit!

But it all looked black enough, on this night before the court, until the surgeon astonished Jack and myself with a few well-put observations. 'I'm not on the court,' he said, between puffs at his pipe, 'and I can show you a dirty bit of ground hog work. There is no love lost between Hand, who is an American, wears Burnside whiskers, and hopes for some future favour by boot-

licking the commander, and poor Mike. Sergeant Hand has saved money. He gets a heavy "travel pay," and hopes to be made post sutler, and so grow rich. In the hospital I get all the men's chatter through my hospital steward. Hand has some crony recommended for promotion among the ten sergeants and ten corporals, and — Maloney was never drunk before! Now, I can almost swear that poor Mike's enemies put all those men on to him, who went off on pass, to drink successively with him, and so lead him away.

‘ They, the old soakers, all came home sober. Poor Maloney has been victimised, and he may have realised his condition, and sees now what he lost. The real author of the job is this slick Sergeant Hand, or his friends. Maloney, in desperation, may have taken a couple of cracks at him, but Hand did not see the shooter? Maloney's gun was clean. I think it's a case for "executive clemency?" ’

‘ If I believed this,’ cried the warm-hearted Jack, ‘ he shall not lose his stripes. See here,

Sawbones, you can talk to each of us alone about this. Find out what you can, and we will see—what we shall see.'

The undercurrent of garrison life is often stranger than the official flood tide foaming along on the surface. When the garrison court assembled the next day at ten, there was a peculiar interest manifested by every one on the post. But the three members of the court never exchanged a word until the court was called to order in the presence of the commanding officer and the guard and orderly as sole spectators. With due solemnity the prisoner was introduced; and Sergeant Michael Maloney entered far paler than when he fired point blank into the faces of Hood's Texans springing up the rugged slopes at Gaines's Mills. He was a model of soldierly neatness and symmetry, devoid only of the treasured sergeant's sword, upon which he had expended three years of polishing, till its Corinthian brass mountings gleamed like the gold of Ophir.

His sad eyes roved over the silver castles on the epaulettes of his three judges, and in an awestruck silence he heard the orders appointing the court read, and listened to the swearing-in of the court and the recorder. When asked if he had an objection to being tried by any particular member of the court, his eyes rested upon all of us in succession. He bowed his head in manly negation, which was simply touching. I rejoiced that, as a garrison court, we could not administer the extremest penalties, for I had heard more of the sneaking conspiracy which had affected the simple sergeant's ruin. I fancied that the surgeon had also privately enlightened my colleagues.

It was a painful task for me to read the charge, under the ninety-ninth article, 'Conduct prejudicial to good order and military discipline.' The specification, which I had been forced to draw with much useless flourish of antiquated verbiage, was strong enough to fell an ox. It was after this interesting ceremony that Handsome Jack, looking like a

robust Cupid - in - arms, informed the prisoner that he was entitled to the assistance of counsel, to be selected from the military persons the garrison.

There was a convulsive sob racking brave Michael Maloney's breast as he shook his head and brushed his face with the sleeve marked with four service-stripes.

He declined the assistance of counsel, and I then formally arraigned him, and was astounded to hear him, in a broken voice, plead guilty to the specification and guilty to the charge. The three members of the court gazed blankly at each other. The pleas cut off the necessity of the introduction of evidence ; in fact, there was no official evidence available, save the excited condition of the man when his room door was forced.

Our commander hastily left us at this legal surrender of the unhappy man.

I deemed it my duty to inform the prisoner that he was entitled to make a brief oral or written statement by virtue of his plea. The

poor fellow stood 'before his betters' and huskily said, 'Gentlemen, I leave it all to you. I have always tried to be a good soldier, and it's idle for me, a poor sergeant, to say that I'm not bound to know good order and military discipline. I've known my whole duty these many years. I was born in the army.'

There was an awkward silence as the prisoner was returned to his quarters in charge of the guard, and the last look of his sorrowful face was a good-bye, a long good-bye, to his chevrons. He had opened the door to his own degradation as far as rank and promotion went. One fault, the fault of the hot-headed and gallant Celt, the one spot upon his faultless record, had marred the clean record of years of brave service, of drudgery and grinding privation.

In silence I prepared a dozen or more folded ballots, all of similar appearance, marking them 'Guilty' and 'Not Guilty.' As became the younger, I voted first, and handed the hat to the others for their secret

selection and vote. The voting was done without discussion. When the record of the votes upon the specification and charge was correctly announced by me, there was a majority recording the fact that the absent prisoner was *not guilty* of either the charge or the specification. An astounding verdict.

There is a wholesome special obligation of the oath of the judge - advocate and recorder which absolutely forbids him from disclosing the vote of a 'particular member.' From that day to this I have never known who cast the majority votes which, in face of a plea of 'Guilty,' declared Sergeant Michael Maloney 'of Ours' to be innocent. I may have had some personal ideas, but my oath would not allow me to indulge in 'vain conjectures.' There were other prisoners tried afterwards before this famous court, who received very moderate punishments for trifling offences.

When the result of the trial of Maloney was reluctantly announced to the commanding

officer, in answer to a direct question at mess, I was glad that Handsome Jack gallantly 'leaped into the chasm.' The colonel rose and 'left the rich meats all untasted,' storming out of the room. For three days we were denied the light of his countenance, save when he sent his orderly for us, officially. I was happy and busy in my duplex functions and I escaped the storm.

As post adjutant, I was gruffly ordered to release 'Maloney from arrest and restore him to duty—chevrons and all.' As recorder of the court, I was bidden not to make up the record of this case of legally 'squaring the circle.' The proceedings *in re* Maloney were all quashed. Lightly as the roe I sped away to the sergeant's room. When I entered he had the haggard look of impending disaster. When I left the strong man sobbing at his table, he had stopped an impromptu oration while saying, 'Liftinint, tell the gentlemen av the coort,' for his flood of pent-up sorrows swayed him as the wild rain-gusts shake the bending pines.

‘Maloney’s bad break’ was his only one. His rosy face shone out in ranks for years, untinged with ‘*spiritus frumenti*,’ and yet he did not get his orderly sergeant’s lozenge until a long year later. Sergeant Hand had left us for good and all. I was cut off the next year in the Arizona deserts, with four of our men on duty, to face a possible starvation, when I found a bullet-headed sapper secretly adding his allowance of food to mine by hiding it under my desert pillow. ‘What do you mean by this?’ I demanded of the shame-faced Riley. He mumbled: ‘You gave Mike Maloney a square deal. We had all got round him to fill him up just for a lark. There was them as would ruin him, we found out later. Damme if I know how you found him “Not Guilty!” but we was all played on—and—you *did the square thing!*’

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